



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

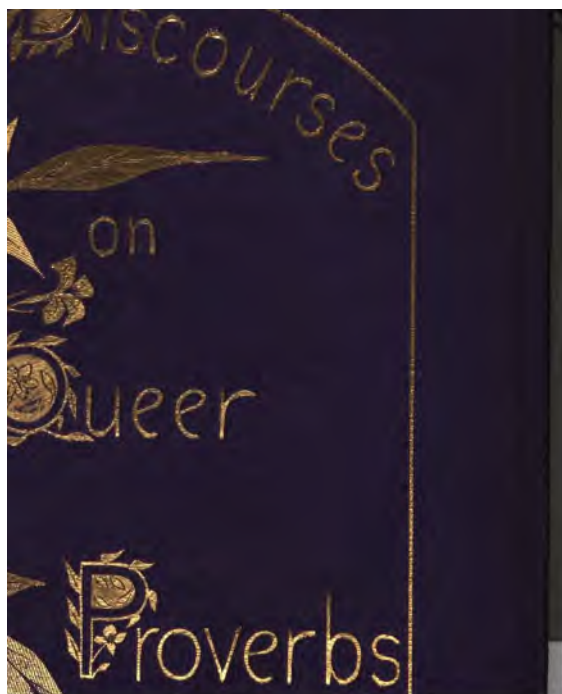
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





HODDER & STOUGHTON'S
BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

ELEGANTLY BOUND, FOR PRIZES AND PRESENTS.

Old Merry's Volumes.

"Old Merry' has become one of our literary institutions, and we are always glad to give him cordial greeting, as a worthy successor to Old Humphrey, Peter Parley, and other caterers of intellectual amusement for the children of a past generation."—*Athenæum*.

I.

OLD MERRY'S ANNUAL FOR 1869.

Square 16mo, price 5s., choicest binding, gilt edges. Profusely illustrated.

II.

QUEER DISCOURSES ON QUEER PROVERBS.

Square 16mo, price 2s. 6d., cloth elegant. Four full-page illustrations.

III.

FIRESIDE CHATS WITH THE YOUNGSTERS.

Square 16mo, price 3s. 6d., cloth. With coloured frontispiece of "Old Merry."

"Our boys will laugh in heartiness, then think in quietness, over the pleasant, racy, wise talk of this genial friend."—*Nonconformist*.

IV.

OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY.

Stories Round the Fire, by R. M. BALLANTYNE, W. H. G. KINGSTON, EDWIN HODDER, Mrs. BICKERSTAFFE, SIDNEY DARYL, and others of the Party. Square 16mo, price 1s., neatly bound. Illustrations.

"A cheery little book, full of joyous and sensible fun."—*The Press*.

"Old Merry' is an excellent storyteller. His 'Christmas Party' is a seasonable book, and will be greatly relished."—*Public Opinion*.

LONDON :

HODDER & STOUGHTON, 27, PATERNOSTER ROW.

ILLUSTRATED BOOKS FOR THE YOUNG.

WITH THE TIDE ;

or, a Life's Voyage. By SIDNEY DARYL. In square 16mo, 3s. 6d., cloth elegant.

TOLD IN THE TWILIGHT:

Short Stories for Long Evenings. By SIDNEY DARYL. Square 16mo, 3s. 6d., cloth elegant.

BUSY HANDS AND PATIENT HEARTS ;

or, the Blind Boy of Dresden and his Friends. Translated by ANNIE HARWOOD. By GUSTAV NIERITZ. Second and cheaper edition, square 16mo, 2s. 6d., cloth elegant.

THE BUTTERFLY'S GOSPEL,

and other Stories. By FREDRIKA BREMER. Translated by MARGARET HOWITT. Square 16mo, 2s. 6d., cloth elegant.

STORIES FROM GERMANY.

Translated by ANNIE HARWOOD. Square 16mo, 3s. 6d., cloth elegant.

SILVER LAKE ;

or, Lost in the Snow. By R. M. BALLANTYNE. Square 16mo, 3s. 6d., cloth elegant.

THE WEAVER BOY WHO BECAME A MISSION-

ARY : being the Story of Dr. Livingstone's Life and Labours. By H. G. ADAMS. Fcap. 8vo, price 5s., cloth elegant, portrait and illustrations.

WASHED ASHORE ;

or, the Tower of Stormount Bay. By W. H. G. KINGSTON. New edition. Square 16mo, 2s. 6d., cloth elegant.

THE CABINET OF THE EARTH UNLOCKED.

By E. S. JACKSON, M.A., F.G.S. Square 16mo, price 2s., cloth.

OLIVER WYNDHAM :

a Tale of the Great Plague. By the author of "Naomi." Fcap 8vo, 5s., cloth.

LONDON :

HODDER & STOUGHTON, 27, PATERNOSTER ROW.

Queer Discourses on Queer Proverbs.







FRONTISPIECE.

See p. 1.

Queer Discourses
ON
QUEER PROVERBS.

By OLD MERRY.



LONDON:
HODDER & STOUGHTON,
27, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCLXVIII.

250. n. 38.

*Butler & Tanner,
The Selwood Printing Works,
Frome, and London.*



CONTENTS.

	PAGE
“The cat in gloves catches no mice”	1
“He that cuts off his nose spjtes his own face”	6
“Doing nothing is doing ill”	9
“Rome was not built in a day”	} 13
“An oak is not felled with one blow”	
“Be merry and wise”	17
“Never tread on a sore toe”	22
“People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones”	25
“A merry heart doeth good like a medicine”	30
“All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy”	34
“When the horse is stolen, they lock the stable door”	39
MR. POSITIVE.	
“Positive men are most often in error”	44
ON THE WATER.	
“It's easy going with the stream”	50
ON DONKEYS.	
“Every ass loves to hear himself bray”	55
ON SPECTACLES.	
“There are none so blind as those that won't see”	61


SCENES FROM THE LIVES OF JACK AND JILL.	PAGE
“One man’s fall is another man’s lesson”	65
“A little leak will sink a great ship”	69
BE SOMETHING.	
“Every man is the architect of his own fortune”	75
IT’S ONLY MY STYLE.	
“A crooked tree will have a crooked shadow”	81
WHERE ARE WE NOW?	
“Praise a fair day at night”	87
TESTS OF CHARACTER.	
“It is not the cowl that makes the monk”	91
ON THE ICE.	
“Keeping from falling is better than helping up”	98
ON PLUCK.	
“He that’s afraid of the wagging of feathers must keep from among wild-fowl”	102
ON STILTS.	
“Hasty climbers have sudden falls”	108
ON SIMPLETONS.	
“Fools make feasts, and wise men eat them”	113
ABOUT HOBGOBLINS.	
“A quiet conscience sleeps in thunder”	119
PASSERS-BY.	
“There is a history in all men’s lives”	125
“A merry Christmas !”	132





Queer Discourses.

"The cat in gloves catches no mice."

 HO ever heard of a cat in gloves?" says one; "why it is as absurd to suppose that cats wear gloves as that they carry toothpicks in their waistcoat pockets."

"I've heard of Puss in Boots," says another, "and I can understand that; but to make a proverb about a cat in gloves, seems nonsense."

"But I dare say it means something, after all," says a little girl in the congregation; "for I've got a beautiful little book all about 'Three little kittens who put on their mittens,' and I'm sure that's natural enough."

A boy in the assembly whispers to another boy, "Jem, my motto is 'live and let live,' and mice are prettier than cats any day; so the sooner it becomes a national custom for cats to wear gloves, so much the better for the mice."

"I think it would be a great catastrophe," answers Jem. Mr. Merry mounts the rostrum, repeats his text, and when

the conversation among his congregation ceases, commences his discourse.

* * * * *

Boys and girls, the words I have selected for my text are not taken from among the 3000 proverbs which king Solomon wrote, but from the collection of a quaint old fellow, who called himself Poor Richard. A proverb does not always mean what it says, although if it is a good one it always says what it means. In this respect it is like a parable, or a fable. If a boy has got a cake which he can't eat himself, and won't give to anybody else, we say "Ugh! you dog in the manger." If we see a girl staring at a doll with admiring eyes in a toy-shop, and she finds the price is two shillings, and she has only got sixpence, and she says "Well, it isn't such a nice doll after all; my calico-faced one at home is ever so much prettier;" we say, "My dear, the grapes are sour." The boy and girl would both know what we meant, although cakes have nothing in particular to do with mangers, nor dolls with sour grapes.

So when Poor Richard said, "The cat in gloves catches no mice," he didn't mean to infer that cats actually wore gloves, he didn't mean to say that four-legged cats ought to take off their gloves, and catch four-legged mice, but he meant, in a few pithy words, which might be easily stowed away in the memory, to teach us a lesson as suggestive as the dog in the manger, or the fox and the grapes.

Now the business of a well-conducted cat is to earn her own living in a respectable and honest way. As soon as

she is old enough to make a start in life, she is furnished with a stock-in-trade to follow her calling: a good instinct, a keen scent, a sharp eye, and sharper claws. These she is to use to procure food for herself, and she is always provided with good and decent clothing, which she has only to keep clean, sufficient to last her for life. Her duty is to catch mice, but if she wanders from the path of rectitude, and slinks into the pantry for stray pieces of cold mutton; if she pretends to be asleep and purring on the carpet when dinner is being laid, and jumps up as soon as the servant's back is turned, to crib a bit of steak,—she ceases to carry on the business of life as a well-conducted cat. Or, if she prefers the hearth-rug and the warm room, and abandons herself to the luxuries and elegancies of life, instead of devoting her days to its real practical work, she, in effect, puts on her mittens or gloves, and she ceases to catch mice, and so she ceases to be a good and useful cat.

Far be it from me, my boys and girls, to say that we are cats, and our object in life is to catch mice, but this I do say—we, like the cats, have some special work in life to perform, and if we, after the manner of the cat, of whom dishonourable mention has been made, forget to fulfil, or contract habits which prevent us fulfilling that object, we lose our purpose in life. And in proportion as we are higher and nobler than cats, so is our mission, and so is our loss if we fail to be what we were created to be.

Now take a few examples of what I mean :—

The old mill-pond is frozen over, and a host of boys are sliding and skating upon its glistening surface. There is a cry, a splash!—the ice has given way; three boys are in the freezing water, and on the point of drowning. How do the bystanders act? Do they button up their great coats, draw on their gloves, adjust their skates? No; away with everything that hinders the rescue of the lads in peril. Coats are off, gloves are off; hither and thither they are rushing for ropes and poles and boat-hooks, and with a hearty will they put all their means into use, and cheer upon cheer resounds as the half-drowned lads are drawn out from the water. But “the cat in gloves catches no mice.”

There is a poor girl sitting by yonder window, stitching away at her work; her mother lies ill upon the scantily covered bed. There will be no fire through the night, no food to nourish the poor invalid, no candle to chase away the gloom of darkness, unless that work is finished by sunset. Does the girl rest her head upon her hand and weep? Does she cheer up her heart by running out to see those strolling players who have just gone down the street? Does she play with her thimble and cotton, in a listless mood? or does she wrap herself round in that old red shawl, and nestle down beside the dying embers on the hearth? No; “the cat in gloves catches no mice.” Stitch! stitch! stitch! with a hearty good will, with a determined mind, with a noble purpose; and when night comes on, and she sits beside her mother’s bed, and reads to her, in the

now cheerful room, she realises the profit of doing what one has to do with one's might.

It is New Year's Eve, and a boy is kneeling by his bedside. He is trying to think of the past year, of its follies and its pleasures, of its losses and its gains, and he is thinking of the New Year, and what he will do, and how he will do it. But he forms his own plans in his own way; he looks to his own help and his own strength; he entangles himself in a net-work of resolutions which can never be carried out, because they are not made in the right way. He puts on weights which he can never carry, instead of casting off every weight, and the sins which most easily beset him; and so he starts on a fresh stage in the race of life. Does he have, in its best and right sense, a Happy New Year? No, he has put himself under a yoke, and has fettered himself with robes of his own righteousness. "The cat in gloves catches no mice."

Now, let me give the practical application of the discourse. "Handle your tools without mittens;" never encumber yourselves with anything that will hinder your usefulness; soldiers don't want to take dressing-cases into a battle-field; finery in language will not make you thoughtful men and women. As Samson burst the cords which bound him, so each of you try to burst away from every fetter which prevents you using your whole strength to do your whole duty.





"He that cuts off his nose spites his own face."

NO doubt you all remember that affecting incident in the life of the "maid who was in the garden hanging out the clothes," and who fell a victim to the cannibal appetite of a blackbird. And you remember the pain and inconvenience which is recorded in her biography, as happening when she found her nose was off. I do not wish to dwell on the painful details, or harrow your feelings by raking up similar instances, but looking our subject in the face, we see at once that the nose is the most prominent feature, and therefore demands notice. Everybody knows that the nose of everybody is not alike. Among the varieties may be mentioned, the Roman, Grecian, snub, pug, bottle, turn-up, Saxon patent, Wellingtonian, and endless subdivisions of these great divisions. There are few people who do not pride themselves on their noses, and whether they are aware of any peculiarity or not, they generally content themselves with what they have. For example, when Red Riding Hood addressed her supposed relative, she said, somewhat familiarly perhaps upon so delicate a subject, "Grandmamma, what a large nose you have!" And the memorable reply, worthy of a better speaker, was, "All the better to smell with, my dear."

And in the same way, a gentleman whose nose was a *fine* specimen of the order called snub, being reminded of the fact, replied

“Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little *long*.”

It requires but little thought to see, therefore, that any person who wilfully cuts off his nose, be it snub, pug, or Roman, large or small, spites his own face. But you may not so easily see at a glance, why any person should be so infatuated as to play upon that organ in the way mentioned in the text.

In a certain home, not a hundred miles, perhaps, from yours, lived two boys, and, like Juno's swans, “wherever they went, they went coupled and inseparable.” But one day they fell out, whether it came to a stand-up fight or not I can't say, but the upshot of the quarrel was this; “Charles, you're a disagreeable, ill-tempered, ugly fellow; you're a cheat, and I won't play with you again!” Those were Edward's sentiments. “And you're no better than you ought to be, and you know it, you mean, cowardly, sneaking thing; I'll never speak to you again!” Those were Charles's sentiments. Now it happened that these two boys had no other young friends in the neighbourhood, and if they did not play together they must either go without play, or play alone, and that is terribly slow work, as we all know. So both were very wretched. Marbles fell into disuse, bat-trap-and-ball was neglected, and the two boys wandered about, out of sorts with themselves and everybody else. Their companionship was the main feature of their joy, and they had cut it off!

Of all youthful vices, I think "quarreling with one's victuals" is about the worst. Somebody says, "Contentment with a crust is good fare;" and another person goes so far as to say, "A contented mind is a continual *feast*;" but as this implies too much in one sense, and too little in another, I prefer the former maxim, although such fare for long would put us in a fair way of turning crusty. But some young people with good food before them, turn up their noses, make remarks, and finally decline to eat. Of course they soon grow hungry,—as the Yankee says, "their stomachs begin to think their teeth are knocked out,"—and their growling without is soon followed by a growling within. Serve them right; for he who cuts off his supply of provisions spites his own stomach.


Treasuring up a bad spirit; being sulky and moping about without speaking; eating a cake all yourself rather than give a bit to your schoolmate because he was greedy and asked; staying at home rather than walk out with your sister; pretending to be ill and having to take physic because you will not learn your lessons,—all these are instances which illustrate my text:—"He that cuts off his nose spites his own face."

I remember an absurd bit of rhyme the boys used to say when I was a youngster, and as it contains the moral of my discourse in a pithy form, I shall conclude by quoting it, and trust you will act upon the advice it contains:—

"Says Aaron to Moses,
 'Let's cut off our noses;'
 Says Moses to Aaron,
 'It's better to wear 'em.'"



“Doing nothing is doing ill.”

“ AMES, what are you doing?”—“Nothing, sir.”
“Who’s that boy with you?”—“Charley, sir.”
“What’s he doing?”—“Helping me, sir.”

“Well, never let me catch either of you doing it again.”

Now that is rather an absurd dialogue, but I dare say you have heard many like it. There is no such thing as doing nothing, for, as the text says, doing that is doing ill.

It would not, therefore, be a difficult thing to prove that a do-nothing is a ne’er-do-well, and, as James and Charley evidently belonged to that order, they got a well merited reproof.

I shall endeavour to show you in this brief discourse that there are two classes of do-nothings, and that both are ill-doers.

1. Active do-nothings. That is, those who have the appearance of always doing something, but in reality do nothing. We read a long letter, crossed and re-crossed, and after we have come to “yours affectionately,” we say, “A very nice letter, but nothing in it.”

We hear a gentleman give an address or make a speech,

and when he has concluded, we say, "Wonderful man! he spoke for an hour, and said nothing."

We hear people complain about being very tired sometimes, and find on inquiry that they are tired of doing nothing.

A party of travellers started on a journey through the bush. They walked on and on for many hours, now up hill and now down valley, and they broke twigs of brushwood and blazed the trees with their hatchets as they passed along, but after two days' hard walking they found themselves at exactly the same spot from which they started.

I knew a man who was nearly eighty years old, and when he was asked one day, "Where are you now, and what are you doing?" he replied, with a woebegone shake of the head, "I am where I was when I was a lad, and doing just the same thing." The fact was, his life had been a failure. He had always been busy, but had done nothing; had always been jogging on, but came back to the same place from which he started.

There are some people who are always going to do something. "I mean to be a regular dabster at painting," says a boy. And he folds his arms, and chuckles over the idea. He surrounds himself with paper, brushes, and pencils; reads a chapter of *D'Aubigné* to see if he will throw any light upon his subject; makes elaborate preparations, but never really begins. He seems to think the painting will do itself. He grows ill at ease with his easel, and does not stick to the colouring half so well as the colouring sticks to him. He thinks the "lines have not fallen in pleasant

places," and at last decides that nature should draw him to paint, rather than that he should draw nature. And so his ambition dies away.

"I mean to be an author," says another, and he begins to write an essay on "Things in general;" but he exhausts himself long before he does his subject, and soon decides that essay-writing is unfortunately not his forte.

And you have perhaps determined a great many times to do something grand—something that shall make your future bright and glorious, and perhaps you have hustled about a great deal over it; but if you look back upon the past it is possible you may see that after all you have done nothing. If this is the case, never do it again.

2. Passive do-nothings. That is, those who have the appearance of doing nothing, but in reality do something.

John had got into a scrape—appearances were against him, and he saw the schoolmaster was about to address himself to the work of giving him a dressing; Edward sat there, and knew that John was innocent, but he never spoke a word. He might have screened his friend and saved his character and his back, but he did nothing.

Yes, boys, you are right; he was a mean cowardly rascal. He was a passive do-nothing.

Let me give you a few instances in which a passive do-nothing does evil.

There is a rick, and a spark of fire is smouldering at its side, and he does not put it out; a playfellow is in trouble, and he does not say a word to cheer him; a lad is drowning, and he

does not jump in to save him ; a horse is starting off without its driver, and he does not try to stop it ; a man has been run over, and he does not staunch his wound. And when he is blamed, he says, " Really I have done nothing." No, but that is the evil ; he ought to have done something.


We judge people as much by what they do not, as by what they do, and when at last the great reckoning day comes, do-nothings will be judged by the same standard. "*Inasmuch as ye did it not.*"





“Rome was not built in a day.”

“An oak is not felled with one blow.”

“ HO said it was?” Well, that hardly belongs to the present question, although an interesting inquiry, —nor shall I attempt a reply to that youngster who has suggested, “Perhaps it was built in a night.” It would be absurd to notice the question put by another, “Whether a day at Rome lasts as long as a Day at Algiers,” and it would take us a day to roam over the numerous questions which might be raised, but would not build up a profitable discourse. I want you to understand the text in the same sense as that other proverb, which says, “An oak is not felled with one blow.” A voice from the audience said, “It would blow a feller to do it, and that would be a hoax.” But I object to the pun as being wide of the mark. No, sir; silence; don’t make matters worse by “axing” my pardon.

You know the history of Rome perhaps, if you do not you ought, so I shall briefly tell you a few facts in connection with the building of the city which you may not see in every history. The brickmakers made one brick at a time; the bricklayers laid one brick on another, one at a time; the boys who carried

the bricks to them took one step at a time. The mortar was laid on one lump at a time, and the sun hardened it one day at a time. The beams and rafters were settled in their places one at a time, but before they became beams and rafters they were trees, and the trees were felled one blow at a time.

And so the city was built.

By the yawning and shuffling of feet, I suppose I am to understand you think I'm talking stuff and nonsense, eh? Well then, let me give you two heads of discourse, which you may furnish with brains; and in the application, "if the cap fits, wear it;" it were a fit of capriciousness to refuse.

1. How to build.

2. How to fell.

1. Rome was not built in a day. A character is not formed in a day. No, little by little, one thing at a time, and that done well, is a very good rule, as many can tell. You want to be something, want to do something, and you are vexed because you can't do it all at once. A boy once wanted to be rich; he picked up some old boots, and soled them. His sole desire then was that they might be sold again. His attempts were not bootless; a man gave him half-a-crown for them, and though, when he put them on, he may perhaps have thought he had (to speak vulgarly) "put his foot into it," the boy had gained his point. With the half-crown he *bought* a lot of old boots, these he soon got rid of, perhaps saying to himself, "a good riddance of bad rubbish;" and after a time, he started in a little shop on his own account. Then he got a large shop. And so from picking up boots in the street, he came to be a

rich man, and owed his awl to his first ambition, which was his *last* resource. But it was little by little which made him what he was.

You want to be clever, do you? Well, you can't swallow the dictionary, and digest it all at once; you must begin with A B C, and go on to a-b ab, b-o-w bow, and c-o-w cow, and don't be bowed down or cowed in spirit if you don't get on very fast. Do little by little, and soon you will be able to read off the dictionary a page at a time, and a very interesting and instructive book you will find it to be. Then you will want to learn some languages. Well, you may dine off foreign tongue every day of your life, but I advise you to eschew the fancy; depend upon it, nothing will help you to learn a language but beginning at the beginning, and steadily working your way through it.

So with the cultivation of good habits and virtues. Don't be disheartened because you cannot do all you would like, and be all you would like, in a moment. Go steadily plodding on, and remember that Rome was not built in a day.

2. How to fell.

An oak is not felled with one blow,—A bad habit is not conquered with one struggle. Poor little Kate: hers was a very bad temper. Everything seemed to go awry with her. Somehow or other, everybody seemed to be bent on thwarting her, and she very often lost her temper. That, certainly, was what she wanted to do—lose her temper—but not in the way which she so often did it: she wanted to get rid of it altogether. By the bye, those are very funny sayings, “keep your

temper," and "lose your temper;" I suppose the reason is because both relate to "the rule of contrary." Well, she had got a little pocket-book, and every time she got out of sorts she determined to put a black cross in the book, so that she might see how many times a day she went wrong, and whether she was able to conquer herself. For many days, cross after cross, cross after cross, sometimes as many as twenty a day, but by-and-by there were only ten, and at length, after many long months, only one, and sometimes not any at all. And so, little by little, stroke upon stroke, the tree of ill-temper, which bore such bitter fruits, was felled.

There is an illustration; you may find a hundred more if you will only take the trouble to think. There is an old saying, "It's easier to pull down than it is to build up again." And it is quite true in one sense. But you will find it is quite as hard, if not harder, to pull down an old bad habit, than it is to rear up a good one. But patient, persevering labour, will do both.





“Be merry and wise.”

THE first point I shall discuss is, Is it wise to be merry? and although, at first sight, you may think the case to be as plain as the nose on your face, I shall show that it is not. Then, I shall ask, Is it a merry thing to be wise? and shall try to show that it is.

1. Is it a wise thing to be merry?

It is wise to be merry under certain circumstances. Scout a boy who is not merry on Guy Fawkes day, and who does not make his jokes fly as brightly as the rockets or the fire-balls; scout the boy who takes his book up into some quiet corner, when his friends come to spend the evening with him, and are bent on games at forfeits, or lotto, or are trying to get up their spirits for a good go-in at snap-dragon. Scout the girl who makes her doll's clothes with as gloomy a style of her own as if she were making a shroud for her next of kin; or the girl who takes her turn at the swing, as a dull, mopish, matter of course, or as if she were conferring a favour on her companions by swinging. I've been at evening parties when boys and girls have wandered about like mutes at a funeral, and have made the whole thing a grave affair; I've even taken youngsters out

sight-seeing when they have been as gloomy as if they had been seeing sites for their burials ; I've seen half-holidays anything but merry affairs, and play-grounds anything but merry places. In all which circumstances it was unwise not to be merry.

From my heart I like to see all people, old or young, merry. That old man who stands at his garden gate, and says, " Good morning, sir ; top o' the morning to you !" as I pass, is as merry a soul as ever Old King Cole was. If he drops his crutch, and rheumatism prevents him picking it up, and he can't get back to the house until somebody comes to help him, he treats the whole thing as a joke, and shakes his old sides, as he thinks of the absurdity of the situation.

What a lively creature is Sally Harper, who lives in one of those tumble-down cottages up the lane ! I've heard that old woman laugh over misfortunes which other people would have cried about, till the tears have run down her face ; and many a time has she said, " Lor bless yer, sir ! I should ha' bin in my grave years ago, if I hadn't ha' bin a bit cheerful."

That poor little urchin who creeps out from his miserable bed in the cold winter morning, and bare-footed wends his way to the crossing which he superintends,—how awfully weary life would be to him, if he were not to whistle the merry tunes, jump Jim Crow round his broom, make mud pies with his sweepings, and make a catherine-wheel of himself when he can't afford fireworks.

Yes, and the world would be better and happier, and life would be more worth living, and friends more worth having,

and dull care more easily chased away, if people would only be merry. If I were a painter I would never make a mournful face my study ; no, there are too many subjects to be met with every day, everywhere ; I would have a happy, laughing face, with a comic twitch of the mouth, a lustrous sparkle in the eye, and an unsentimental nose ; and everybody who saw my picture should be inspired with a smile as they gazed upon it, and have a merry impression whenever they thought of it.

But it is not well always to be merry. There are times even when boys and girls ought not to be. There are heart-aches, and sorrows, and troubles, even in this gay world ; there are clouds to hide the sunshine of young life ; there are subjects, not gloomy but solemn, which ought to be thought about, *must* be thought about, sooner or later, and it is not wise to be merry then.

I am not clear-headed whether I have made head No. 1 clear ; but I shall proceed to the question ;—

2. Is it a merry thing to be wise ? Philosophers are supposed to be wise men ; but they never look merry ; that is, if their portraits are true. They always seem to be puzzling their heads about something disagreeable, and they are always bald-headed men, as if their burning thoughts had burnt all their hair off. Their beards seem the only waggish thing about them. And poets, they are supposed to be wise : but who would say, that Cowper, with his head tied up in a napkin ; or Pope, with his hungry looking countenance ; or Wordsworth, with every spark of fun that ever was in his face vanished on an excursion—were merry men ?

But to be wise it does not follow that we must be either philosophers or poets, and I have my doubts whether some of those great men were wise after all. To be wise, it does not follow that we must even be very, very clever. A wise man is prudent, kind, useful ; he is respected, loved, honoured. A wise man is always contented with what he has, industrious to work for that which he has not, grateful and happy when he has got it. Well, then, it is a merry thing to be wise. Who should be so merry as the prudent, kind, contented, industrious man? And he is the wise man. A boy with a seared conscience can't be a merry boy ; he may make a great pretence of always being jolly and reckless, but when he lies down at night on his bed in the dark, and guilt worries him so that he can't sleep ; when he walks all alone in the long lanes or roadways, and there is nobody to whom he can display his merriment,—he feels what a sham his laughter and fun is after all, and he wishes he were a different boy. Well, it is a wise thing to have a conscience void of offence, and that entitles us to be merry.

That girl with the cross, crabbed, sullen temper—is she merry? No. We don't say it is a fine day when the sun comes out for half an hour, and a heavy rain for the next half-hour, and sunshine, rainbow, and rain for the next ; and we can't say that she is a merry girl who is one moment all hoity-toity with pleasure, and the next all hammer-and-tongs with displeasure. Note : it is a wise thing to cultivate a good temper, and the good tempered person has a right to be merry ; therefore it is a merry thing to be wise. And so on,

until you have counted up all the virtues and morals and graces, that can adorn a character.

“Be merry and wise.” Everybody loves cheerful people ; and are not the wise always held up to us as patterns for imitation? The two things are joined together and ought never to be asunder. In school or at home, in the workshop or on the roadside, on week-days and Sundays, everywhere, everywhen, seek to become merry and wise.





“ *Never tread on a sore toe.*”



YOUNG ladies and gentlemen,—In taking this discourse in tow, I have a *sort o'* notion that I shall not very well accomplish the feat, because it is a painful subject, and one which appeals to the feelings. If you were as old and rheumatic as I am, you would better understand how very necessary it is to step on the threshold of this discourse very tenderly. I feel it would be useless to divide it under different “heads,” presuming you would object to that *in toto*.

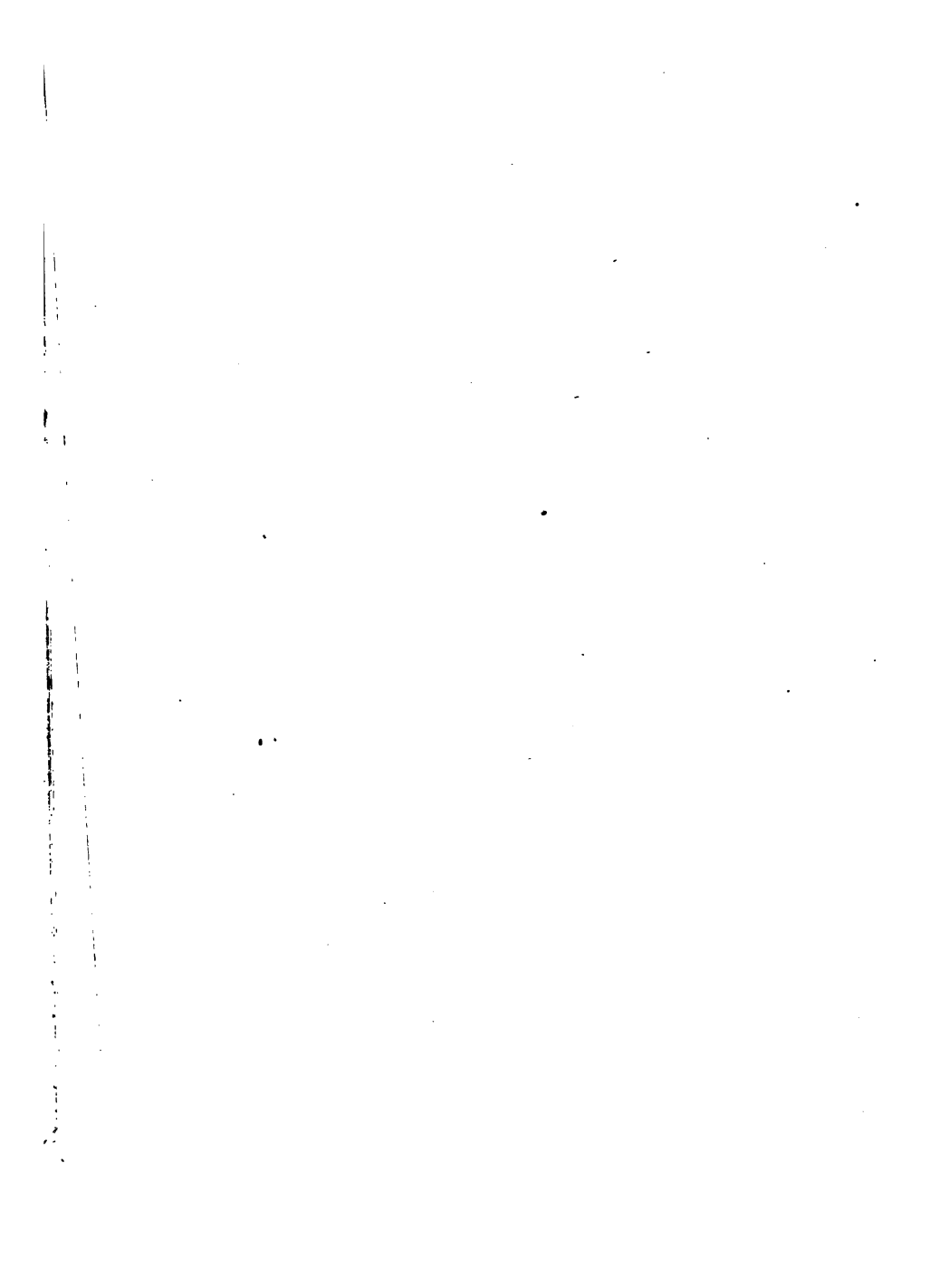
I shall therefore simply put the question of the sore toe on a moral footing; and it may not be a bootless undertaking to attempt to show that we all have sore toes, more or less, and that there are ill-natured people all over the world, who take a spiteful pleasure in treading on them. Of course I do not now speak literally, and you will not feel shocked, therefore, if I lay bare the subject, and after examining it a little, cut it off short.

I once met a gentleman walking out with some ladies, in a gay part of the town, and very much he seemed to be enjoying his stroll. He was elegantly dressed, and as it was the summer



“NEVER TREAD ON A SORE TOE.”

See p. 22.



season he wore a white hat. By-and-by a lad passed ; by the curl on his lip I could see he was harbouring in his mind some evil intent. Cautiously he walked up to the gentleman, and breathed out a dreadful slander on his moral character. I need not repeat it ; it had reference to the theft of an animal often found attached to costermongers' carts. In a moment a cloud fell over the smile on the gentleman's face, he coloured up more in anger than in sorrow, and it seemed as if the pleasure of the walk was gone. The boy had trodden on his sore toe !

Little Amy was as gentle and amiable a child as heart could wish. She would have walked a mile out of her way rather than have trodden on a worm. She would have given her last halfpenny, or have resigned her play-time, to do a kind act for another. She had her weak point ; but who has not ? Her weak point was in her eyes,—she couldn't keep them dry, tears came to her as naturally as mischief came to her brother Tom, and he was as unmerciful to her as she was gentle to him. Now if her brother had been what he ought to be—and few who are !—he would have let her shed her tears in peace and quietness, and said nothing to her about it. Instead of that he nicknamed her “April,” because that month is famous for showers, and when a passing cloud came he would bring in umbrellas or waterproofs to pretend that he was afraid of getting drenched. When her birthday came, the day which should have been all joy and sunshine, Tom, with his usual unfortunate knack, made it a very miserable occasion. He sent her a present, and what do you think it was ? A little

doll's pail and a mop, with the inscription, "For April's use in rainy seasons." No wonder, poor child, she cried a good deal. Tom had trodden on her sore toe.

These illustrations will help you to find others. Think of the thousand pains and troubles which might be spared if people would only refrain from treading upon the sore toes of others. Think how much more delightful it is to make others happy than to cause them sorrow. Look with a charitable eye on the weak parts of others, for all have their weak parts, and try rather to heal a wound than to tear it open. Never laugh at anything which will cause another distress, or say anything which you know will irritate or annoy. "Mention not a rope in the house of one whose father was hanged."

A little word in kindness spoken,
A motion or a tear,
Has often healed the heart that's broken,
And made a friend sincere.





“ People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.”

YOUNG ladies and gentlemen,—My text is taken from the ordinary sayings of ordinary folk. I am not sure who said it first, and I don't think it much matters, because if he hadn't said it, in all probability somebody else would.

Those young gentlemen yonder need not get so red and hot; I am not going to give them a lecture on the evil effects of throwing stones in general. I shall not say even one word to that certain youngster who didn't like some of the boys in his school, and mixed sharp-edged stones in his snow-balls, when he had a game during the late frost. Nor am I going to give you a moral discourse on the character of the young man who put an advertisement in the paper, “Wanted apartments, within a stone's throw of the Crystal Palace.” Nor shall I pander to your curiosity, young ladies, by speculating whether Cinderella performed some crowning feat by building a glass house to live in, after she escaped all the troubles of her slippery paths in youth. Perhaps you think there are very few people who live in glass houses; but I think I can show you that a great many

actually do, and that they are almost always addicted to the bad practice of throwing stones.

I knew of a lady who lived in a glass house. It was beautifully furnished, but the most remarkable thing about it was its being so well stocked with useful things. There were lots of little children's clothes, lots of linen rags and plaisters, and warm comforters and cuffs, and bread and jellies, and all sorts of things which ladies who are so kind as to visit the poor like to possess. But in one corner there was a large bag of stones. The lady's house was known as "Charity Villa." Of course everybody who passed by could see all over the house, and all it contained, and some thought what a pity it was that she had not a stronger house to keep her treasures in.

One day some ladies went past, who were known in the town as the real Sisters of Mercy; not wearing the outward dress to show that they went about doing good, but letting their lives tell the tale. When the owner of the glass house saw them, she opened the door, and called out with a sneer, "How nice a thing it is when charitable people don't let their right hands know what their left hands are doing!" And then she went in a great passion to her bag of stones, and flung them out at the ladies, calling them all kinds of hard names. At last a crowd of people took the matter up, and when they found that the ladies she had thrown stones at used to be visiting the sick and the prisoners and the sorrowful, in their dark, dull abodes, while she only sat in her glass house, seeing and being seen, they cried out, "Down

with the house ! those useful things are only kept for show, while the stones are kept for use." And they all set to work and pelted away at it till not a pane of glass was left.

Now, perhaps you don't see through these glass houses—you don't know in short what I mean.

Suppose a girl or boy is not very truthful, but likes to make a great show of truth, and pretends to be very much shocked if anybody else is wide of the mark in their statements. Their great show of truth is a glass house. And if they pitch into that certain somebody else because he doesn't speak the truth, that is throwing stones. Moral—Don't do it.

Tim Murphy was a boy as full of pranks as a fig is full of pips. He couldn't rest easy unless he was restless about some mischief. He couldn't walk along the street without calling "Cat's meat !" just to entice the confiding cats out of doors, and then set the dogs on to them. He couldn't see an omnibus going along at full trot, without imitating the conductor's whistle, and then diving down a court as soon as the 'bus stopped. He wasn't content with an orange unless he put the peel in the most likely place to trip somebody up. So, of course, he was very liable to get into scrapes ; but he thought he would build a glass house where he might find a refuge. His plan was to be the most sedate, sober-sided boy *in* school, and have his mischief out on the sly. Now it is not my intention to say what my own opinion is of Tim Murphy's modes of amusing himself ; but skylarking was his glass house, and he might have made it answer his purpose

for a long while if he hadn't thrown stones. In order to preserve his character in the school, he used to "blow" on the boys who were fond of skylarking there, and he thought this would be a capital way to divert all suspicion from himself. But it wouldn't do, as poor Tim learnt to his mortification; they hunted him down till at last he had to show them his glass house, and then a battle took place, and as the stones flew about, the house soon came down to the ground, and many of the boys besides Tim were cut and hurt a good deal with the stones and broken pieces of glass.

Now, young ladies and gentlemen, I have only given you one view of this subject, but I hope my discourse has been sufficiently transparent to enable you to multiply lessons from it as you like. You may think of the faults and the vices and the failures you see in others; but before you attempt to reprove them, you must first see if you have those faults and vices and failings yourselves. You may think if you have any odd crotchets or habits or prejudices, which are your glass houses, and if you find you have, don't throw stones at others who have the same. It is a very kind act to pull out the mote from your brother's eye, but you can't do it if you have got a beam in your own. Cast that out of your own eye first, and then you will see clearly how to take the mote out of your brother's eye.

Learn a lesson from the scribes and Pharisees. They lived in a glass house called "religious pride." Sinful themselves, they charged another with sin. They had often before thrown stones at others, but when they were rebuked by the Great

Teacher, and were convicted by their own consciences, none dared cast a stone. Let the rebuke which checked their bad habit, check ours. "He that is without sin among you let him cast the first stone."





“A merry heart doeth good like a medicine.”

A HOMILY.

INSTEAD of giving you long heads to my discourse, I shall give you short tales. A merry heart is sunshine—a diamond lighting up the mine—the music of the life—the spray of the wave. It is a gift to some, an acquisition to others. It does not belong to the rich more than to the poor, to the clever more than to the illiterate. It is not the sole property of youth or of age. It is not a sensitive plant that dies with a breath; it is not an oak that no wind can uproot. It is not a loud and boisterous thing that cannot be tamed; it is not a coy and delicate thing that hides itself like the violet. It is not a thing for ornament, but for use; it is not a creature of circumstances, nor a lord of circumstances. Then what is it?

1. A merry heart is a fairy. The snow was blocking up a doorway, and the poor old woman who lived in the house was trying to roll it away with her poor sticks of skin and bone which represented arms, and couldn't. A fairy descended to the spot, and in less than no time the heap was removed, and the old woman made her way into the cottage. The fire wouldn't light, the wood was damp, and the smoke beat down

the chimney. The candle spluttered, and the wind played draughts with every board in the cottage. But the fairy came into the room, touched with a magic wand the embers on the hearth, caught the thief in the candle and banished him into oblivion, set a screen against the intruding winds, and then threw its magic spell on the old woman, so that her groans were turned into laughter, and her sighs into smiles. Who was the fairy? A merry-hearted boy. His coat was as thin as a sheet, his trousers as ragged as a Cochin China fowl's; he knew nothing about books; the village was his world, and the cottage was his home. But he was a musician: he whistled lively tunes, and though his teeth chattered as he did it on that particular night, it added to the pleasure, for he described it as "an accompaniment on the bones;" he was an artist, for a few touches of his hand would make that old hut picturesque; he was an orator, for he had the art of saying happy things in a happy way; he was a preacher, for his life was a sermon on contentment. And the merry heart of that boy made the cottage happier than many a palace, and the life of his old mother brighter and more cheerful than the life of many a fine lady, and converted his own hard life of toil and penury into a pleasant and good thing, which he was content and thankful to live for.

2. A merry heart is a monarch. A king sat on his throne; around him was gathered his court, and thus he spake: "Hear, O ye people, I make a decree! Certain foreigners have come to this realm, wearing different dresses, speaking different tongues, and addicted to different habits from our own. They

have come as ambassadors from many powers to overthrow the peace of the state. And unless they agree to learn our language, to wear our dress, and adopt our habits, it will be necessary for the peace of our country to banish them, or, in the event of resistance, to proclaim war against them. Go forth, then, my people, and charm these foreigners into allegiance ; bring them to our court, and fascinate them with its attractions, and if they are not ready to take the oath of allegiance and accept the freedom of our city, we will drive them forth to their own countries."

So spake the king, and speedily his people set to work.

Who *was* the king? A merry-hearted boy. Those foreigners were Ill-temper, Envy, Hatred, Malice, Uncharitableness, and other representatives of Great Powers, come on secret embassy to destroy the brightness of that boy's happy, sunny world. And if the merry heart is not the monarch of the life, and if the monarchy is not despotic, if foreign powers are allowed to rule in the state, depend upon it insurrection and defeat will be the result.

How does a merry heart do good like a medicine? That poor old man, bent down with age, and his hands trembling on his stick, shall tell you. "Christmas threatened to be a dull day to me. I remembered the time when my good missis used to be here, and the children all came home, and what with misletoe and music, charades and blind man's buff, mince pies and elder wine, we used to have merry times of it. But I was all alone, and sad-hearted as could be, when who should come in but little Floss and Harry. Bless their hearts! They

ran about, and sang, and danced, and capered, played hide-and-peek with my snuff-box, and kissed me under the misletoe after each game. Thus the day which had begun with sighs ended with smiles, and I was thankful even to be a living old man."

Look in at that home where no merry heart dwells. See the mother sitting down by the fire with her work in her lap, and her hard face, unused to smiles, settled into a grim melancholy. See those two children at the table, one a boy with a scowl on his face, as he hides his puzzle behind a book stood on end so that his sister shall not see him put it together. Hear the sharp, pettish questions, and the cold, chilly answers; see the faces without any soul in them, and the games without any life; listen to the voices without any music; feel the home without sunshine, and tell me if a merry heart there would not do good like a medicine?

And now, in conclusion, I wish to apply my subject:—

To ensure a merry heart, the heart must be in the right place. It must be attended by "a conscience void of offence," by good will, contentment, and love. It must live in an atmosphere free from the poison of meanness, cowardice, dishonesty, untruth, and spleen. It must live in the pure sunshine of life, away from the clouds of remorse, suspicion, and temper. It must have plenty of exercise, plenty of free play for itself, but it must always be held in bounds by wisdom. Then it will be the joy of childhood and of age; the first thing in life to develop, and the last to decay.



“All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.”



HO Jack was—the particular Jack referred to in the text—it concerns us not to enquire. He might have been the hero of the bean-stalk—and we see in that history beautiful alternations of work and play—or he might have been Jack Robinson, whose rapid movements suggest frequent changes of employment and pleasure. But for our purpose the proverb might have named Dick, Tom, or Harry, Elizabeth, Betsy, or Bess with equal propriety, provided we substitute “girl” as occasion requires.

I am inclined to believe that as a rule boys are not much addicted to ceaseless employment, nor girls either, unless they be “maids of *all work*.” There are exceptions however, and we sometimes find lads who are for ever bent on taxing their minds with study, as if mind and brain could keep working with all the regularity of the clock at the Horse Guards, and only want an occasional winding up to keep it in good order. And there are girls who live lives of routine, and whose days revolve like the wheel of a water-mill, and with no more variation. They con over their lessons, talk French, think

French, dream French ; strum over the piano every leisure moment, till music makes the breast savage, and fill up the odds and ends of their time with ceaseless tating and crochet.

Well, it's a mistake ; all work and no play makes Dick a dull boy and Bess a dull girl. We ought to work upon principle, and play upon principle, and regard cricket and croquêt as essential to our well-being as the Latin grammar or needlework. We ought to enter into the true spirit of recreation on our half-holidays as we try to enter into the true spirit of rest on the Sabbath day. Some people there are in the world, and not a few, who look upon holidays as a "bore ;" shudder at the thought that Charley and Ned will be home for the holidays in a few days' time ; and grumble that the boys will have a whole month or six weeks of idleness before them. Now to these well-meaning but mistaken people I would say, —You really don't understand the common principles of our being. We are not machines, which a little oil will keep going for ever ; we have not got india-rubber brains which will stretch to any length we please ; we have not immense store-houses in our memories which will hold all the information we amass from quarter to quarter. We cannot nip in the bud our enthusiasm for hay-fields ; we cannot check the mental hunger with which we crave for rambling on the sea-shore, or donkey-riding on the downs ; we cannot restrain our natural desire for change of scene and change of thought ; we love to see the faces of our tutors, but nature has implanted within us as strong a love to see their backs at certain seasons of the year. Your memories of friends and scenes are as strong when you

revisit them after an absence, as they were before, and so are ours for our studies, and as you love your friends better for the absence which makes the heart grow fonder, so do we our books and our tutors. Besides this, remember, horses do not work always, oxen do not always wear yokes, birds are not always feathering their nests, plants are not always putting forth their leaves and flowers, bees are not always in the hive—and do not we need change as much as these? What made the Israelites the strong, hardy, athletic people they were but their divinely appointed seasons of rest and recreation? What made Greece and Rome glory in their sons? Was it not their strength and prowess, which they owed to their cultivation of times for recreation and festivity? What makes Britain, the glory of the world, blush for her pale emaciated sons? Is it not because they are ground down, over-worked, and all their energies overtaxed? From Sunday morning to Saturday night, they labour and struggle and toil, till flesh and blood fail, while the pluck of British spirit is still willing. And what does the nation almost unanimously say is the antidote? Recreation! and for this reason the Saturday half-holiday is becoming more general among all classes of the community, till by and by we shall see that Saturday recreation will be as much a law as Sunday rest.

And if men and women need this, boys and girls need it much more. Nature teaches us this,—an old head on young shoulders is a worse deformity than a humped back. The kitten plays the livelong day, and even turns its mother's grave instructions upon the science of mousing into fun. The

colt frolics through the fields and rejoices in the liberty of youth ; lambs would not be lambs if they had the steady decorum of sedate old sheep,—and we who are boys and girls would be premature old men and women if we did not love holidays with all our hearts, and vote the “breaking-up to be the jolliest day in the session.”

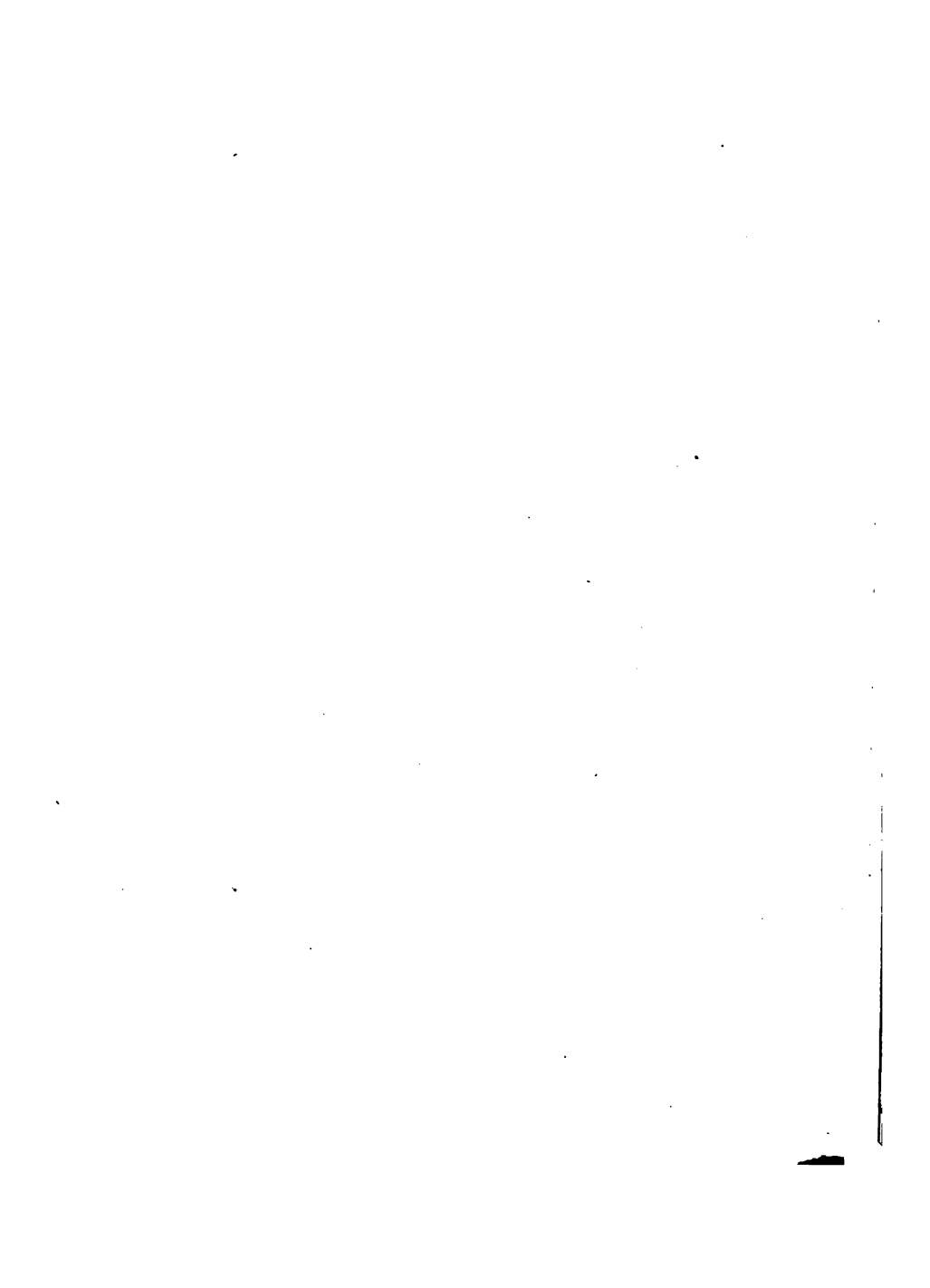
Those are our arguments, and on the strength of them we mean to have all the fun we can during the holidays. We will be Crusaders against every haycock in the fields, every rabbit warren on hill slopes, every squirrel's haunt in the woods. We will be in league with every boatman and bathing-machine proprietor on the beach. Perch, roach, dace, and gudgeon, shall all be fish for our net. Donkeys, ponies, and velocipedes shall bear us in triumph along the green lanes. Every pond shall pay tribute to our aquarium, every gully to our fernery. And if we can only wheedle out a little extra pocket-money, we will make every half-crown worth its weight in gold.

We have a custom of wishing one another a merry Christmas and a happy New Year, and giving a kind of benediction on our birthdays. Why should we not on all our holidays? For a change, I wish you all many happy returns of every holiday, and hope the pleasant memories of them will come back to you even in old age, as they do to me, like glimpses of fairy land, or sounds of distant marriage bells, or strains of sweet music, so that they may help to keep your hearts fresh and green, and light and young, when those faithful old servants, your bodies, are no longer able to bear the strain and racket which they could in years gone by.

But I said we ought to work upon principle and play upon principle. Let me give just one or two hints about the latter.

We should take all our recreation with our eyes open. For further particulars of my meaning, see "Eyes and no Eyes," in "Evenings at Home." We should remember that recreation has a moral influence, as good, if rightly used, as work. If we are beaten at a game, we should cultivate the habit of not showing and not feeling disappointment and vexation. If we are smothered under a haystack, or have our heads ducked under the water when we are kneeling down at a stream to drink, we must cultivate the habit of laughing as heartily when we emerge from the hay or the water, as the one who played the joke, remembering that if we had had the opportunity we should have done exactly the same thing, and quite right too! We should endeavour to be as fair and honest in our sports as the merchant in the counting house, and never take a mean-advantage of the weakness or timidity or folly of others. And we should remember to be *merry and wise*, and to let our moderation be known to all. If we only think of these things in the midst of our enjoyments, and act up to them, our holidays will be ten times more pleasureable, and leave behind them a satisfaction which will sweeten their memory.







"WHEN THE HORSE IS STOLEN THEY LOCK THE STABLE DOOR."

See p. 39.



“When the horse is stolen they lock the stable door.”

NED considered himself a crack hand at making fireworks, and it was his hobby. His play-room was a regular curiosity shop. Pestles and mortars, sticks of all shapes and sizes, papers of all colours and sorts, packages of gunpowder, and camphor, and charcoal, and nitre; and round the shelves were cases for squibs and crackers, silver rain and gold rain, rockets and Roman candles. Guy Fawkes would no more have had the nerve to have gone into Ned's room with his lighted lanthorn in his hand, than he would to have shown his head on Tower Hill. And Ned's mother, poor soul, trembled from head to foot when he displayed himself in the midst of a glory of green fire, or tied a cracker to the tail of dog Ponto, and sent him howling round the garden. But Ned assured her he was a perfect master of the art of making fireworks; and what if he did sometimes have his eyebrows singed?—tut, they would grow again! and if a little explosion took place, what were the odds?—even old Roger Bacon had mishaps of that kind sometimes.

But one night, a day or two before Christmas, Ned was in

his play-room preparing some great masterpiece of art for Christmas Eve, when bang! went something, and bang! bang! went something else; then there was the fizzing of Roman candles, the s-s-s-s-s-sh! of squibs, and the clatter of crackers, but above them all the terrified screams of Ned. All in the house rushed to the scene. Ned was dragged out a perfect guy, as you may suppose, with his clothes on fire, and then everybody rushed in everybody's way, nobody could find pails, and the pumps were frozen; the fire spread, and the house was burnt to the ground.

"Ned, my dear," said his mother, when they were sheltered in the house of a friend, "when we get a new house, you shall never make fireworks again."

Silly woman! when the horse was stolen, she locked the stable door.

"I'm not a bit afraid of thieves, my dear," said a man to his wife, "and if I am not afraid, there's not the least reason why you should be.—Tush! thieves? we live in honest Old England, my dear; there, leave the shutters alone, I'm not afraid of thieves, not I!"

And so the shutters were not shut, and the good man and his wife went to bed.

But it happened one night that he heard a noise downstairs, and seizing a poker in one hand and a fire-shovel in the other, down he crept, till somebody gave him a smartish tap on the tender part of the head, and he fell down stunned, and his wife screamed Thieves! and Murder! out of the window,—but the thieves were not caught.

Ever after that they fastened the shutters.

And now I want to bring the proverb home to ourselves. There are a hundred ways in which we might find that we have locked our stable doors when our horses have been stolen, but I shall confine myself to one illustration only.

Once on a time, a lad sat by his bedside on a New Year's Eve, and as he sat, he thought about the year that was passing away, and the New Year that was so soon to commence. And as he thought, he sighed,—yes, and a long, deep sigh it was too,—for he had found he had lost something that was very precious, and he felt certain he could never find it again. He had lost a year! He thought of life, and his position in it; he thought of Time, and how he had squandered it; and a voice which spoke louder than the merry bells as they chimed in the New Year, told him that Pleasure and Folly and Idleness and Sin had stolen away the year.

He would lock the stable door, he would turn over a new leaf, he would take a warning from the past. Much valuable treasure had been stolen, but not all, and he was determined he would save what was left.

And so the New Year came and the New Year went, and when again the merry bells chimed in the midnight hour, he sat again by his bed-side and thought. Ah! bitter thoughts too; he remembered how he had meant to lock the stable door; how he had meant to turn over a new leaf, and not let that year be stolen too; but he hadn't done it. And another year was lost.

My friends, the closing of the year brings with it a thousand thoughts for us. Some of us have to look back upon a lost year. We can never redeem it, never recover the treasure,—it is gone for ever. The horse that might have been so useful to us in the journey of life has been stolen. But all our treasure is not taken from us, we may yet see another year. Now, then, let us with all the strength and determination we have, with all the courage and nerve we can focus together, with all the resolution that is in us, let us determine in God's strength that we will not let years come and go,—coming with the resolution to lock the stable door, and going with the sorrowful consciousness that the horse is stolen. It speaks well for the man who is ready to forgive the brother who trespasses against him seventy and seven times, but I have very little faith in the man's repentance who comes so often to be forgiven. I think it is right and well that we should make every new year a starting-point, and begin it with new endeavours and good purposes, and lock our stable doors; but it speaks very little for our precautions if we find the year is lost, and the horse is stolen.

When the ship is sunk, every man knows how she might have been saved; and when a year has been lost, we see how we might have improved it.

Let the experiences of the past year be lessons for the one on which we shall soon enter.

May all your sports be the liveliest, all your laughs the heartiest, all your parties the jolliest, all your plum-puddings

the richest, all your holly-berries the reddest, all your log fires the ruddiest, all your hearts the happiest ! Above all, I wish you the better blessings which gild all life with a glorious sunshine, and can make the New Year full of peace and true happiness and joy.





Mr. Positive.

“Positive men are most often in error.”



R. POSITIVE, Sen., was a man more known than liked. He had the unhappy knack of making foes wherever he went, and he went everywhere. In his family he was a despot, and as he was of opinion that his children should have no other opinion than his own, the young Positives were always at loggerheads with him. Inheriting as they did their father's peculiarities, they were always at loggerheads among themselves ; and so it happened that as soon as they were old enough to go out into the world, into the world they went. Apart from the fact that the home of the Positives was a Babel, it was a sort of House of Parliament where every one made a law for himself and sat upon his own opposition bench to vindicate it. The divisions in the house were very numerous, and it was never unanimous on any subject, save in passing votes of censure on the head of the government,—namely, Mr. Positive, Sen. It happened that one day the youngest-born of the family got some queer notions into his head about the Bill of Rights, and as ill-luck would have it,

Mr. Positive, Sen., was discussing in his own mind on that very same day the question of Reform. The upshot of the matter was that Little P. was given to understand, in a manner which could not fail to impress itself upon his youthful mind, that the Reform Bill had passed, and that he, together with his Bill of Rights, was to be thrown out. Little P. was to leave the paternal roof, and make his way in the world.

With a little pocket-money from the Treasury, a bag of books—gazing on which young P. looked blue—a few forget-me-nots from the family Cabinet, a few benedictions and counsels as to local self-government, he was packed off to boarding-school.

Dr. Birchstaff, to whose care he was confided, knew nothing of the politics of the family from whence Little P. came. He was the monarch of the establishment, as every schoolmaster ought to be, and his will was the only law to be recognised. This came very hard to Little P., who had always been accustomed at home to put in his *spoke* in matters concerning the general *weal*. He had never learnt that young people should be seen and not heard, and that it was policy to adopt the opinions of others until he had acquired experience which would entitle him to have opinions of his own.

He had not been long at school before he brought down upon himself the wrath of the Dominie. He had got a difficult sum, and was racking his brains over a question in the Rule of Three. At last a bright light shone on his darkness, a royal road of his own invention brought him to the solution of the difficulty, and with the air of a conqueror he walked to the desk and presented his slate. "Wrong," said the master,

and handed it back. "I beg your pardon, sir, but if you don't mind looking again, I feel sure the answer is right." So the Dominie, who would never have excused himself if he had done an act of injustice to one of his boys, put on his spectacles and looked it through again. "Wrong," said he, "both in the answer and the working out." So Little P. had to go back to his seat, where he was greeted with a point of a pen stuck in his shoulder, and a whispering voice said, "Taken down a peg, young Consequential, eh!" which was unkind. But Master Positive, firm in his own opinion as to whether the sum was right or not, merely scanned it over and amused himself till he was called to present his slate again. "Same answer ; wrong," said the Dominie. "Well then, sir, I'm positive the book must be wrong, for the figures will bring that result, and I'm certain they're right." Dr. Birchstaff frowned, and his frown was like a thunder-cloud in August. However, he worked out the sum on the slate, showed Little P. beyond dispute that he was wrong, and then set him three sums much longer and more difficult, which were to provide food for thought while the rest of the school enjoyed the play-hour.

Soon after the Dominie delivered a discourse from the proverb, "Positive men are most often in error," and briefly hinted at the vanity of youth persisting that arithmetic-books are wrong, and their own working out of figures right. It made no impression however on Little P., who failed to see himself in the glass which had been held up by the Doctor. Only a few days later he had to fill in the names of the rivers in a skeleton-map of Europe. The Rhone occupied the place

intended for the Tagus, and the master struck it out with his pencil. Nothing disconcerted, the young geographer went back to his seat, and considered the question. "I can't make out where it ought to be, unless it's where I've put it," he said to himself; and the result of all his consideration was to put it again in the same place. "He trusted to his memory to strike it out, and I must trust to my memory to put it in again." And when he presented it a second time, he did so with the greatest assurance. "I have told you once before that you have drawn the Rhone in the wrong place," said the master. "Sir, I'm sure it's like that in my geography book." "Are you quite sure?" said the master patiently. "Yes, quite sure," answered he, positively. "Then we will see." And of course Little P. was proved to be wrong; but holding to his opinion rather than the book, he said, "Well, sir, then an earthquake or something must have happened and altered its course, for I'm sure it *was* there."

No wonder that Little P. often got into hot water with his masters, and had to taste the rod in pickle more than any other boy in the school. And no wonder that he was at a great discount with the boys. Being positive that he was always right, he felt it due to his convictions that he should have his own way; and this brought him into constant collision with the majority who were determined he should not. And so he was dubbed "Mr. Know-best," and other kindred terms, and got the cold shoulder from everybody.

Years rolled away, and Little P. had grown old enough to take a situation. His start on this new sphere of life was

typical of a great deal of the future. "Do you feel yourself competent to undertake these duties?" said his employer. "Oh yes, sir, I have no doubt about it; in fact, I am quite certain that I can manage them." Young P. got the situation, and after six months' trial he got his dismissal. And he went away with the inward satisfaction that, whatever his employer might think, he was positive he knew how to manage the routine duties of an office without being dictated to by that old meddler.

Instead of checking his habits of thought and action he continued to strengthen them, until, like his father before him, he was generally disliked, and made foes wherever he went. He got on tolerably well in the world, became a merchant, and had a staff of clerks under him. One night his house was broken into, and his cash-box stolen. He had taken a dislike to a man in his employment who was a "self-assured, opiated fellow," he said; and when in the night he was roused by the thieves and arrived on the landing at the stairs just in time to see them decamp, he declared on the spot that one of them was Reuben, his employ . Circumstances went against the man, he was brought to trial, and Mr. P. had to give evidence.

"Are you positive that the prisoner at the bar is the same person that you saw decamping from your house?"

"I am positive."

"Will you swear?"

"I will."

And so he did. And soon after it was proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that he was wrong. Having many enemies

his offence was not overlooked, and Mr. Positive had to pay the penalty of perjury.

Time would fail to give anything like a history of the life of any one member of the family of Mr. Positive, Sen., so numerous are the scrapes they get into, the foes they make, the disturbances they occasion, and the evil they do. And so numerous are the family that it is not improbable you may be personally acquainted with some of them. If you are, let me advise you to be on your guard with them, and if you find anything attractive and prepossessing in their style, let me warn you that "it is not the cowl that makes the monk," and it is not the persistence in a statement that makes the fact. As Dr. Birchstaff said, "Positive men are most often in error."





On the Water.

"It's easy going with the stream."



EVERY season has its own peculiar charms. Nobody would attempt to deny it, and if they did they would be sure to come off poorly in the argument. Every season has its peculiar sports, and few will deny that the sports of summer are the glory of the year. Green fields, blooming hedgerows, sparkling streams, glistening sunshine ; these all contribute to make the spirits joyous and the heart glad, and put us in the position to feel strong to do anything, full of life and health to enjoy everything ; and merriment flows from all this as a natural consequence. I have seen eyes sparkle at the proposal to go skating on a cold winter morning, and hats flung in the air with glee to go cowslip hunting in the spring, and hands trembling with eagerness to gather material for bon-fires and fireworks in the autumn, but louder have been the hurrahs, brighter the smiles, and more intense the excitement, at the proposition, on a bright summer morning, "Let us go for a day on the water."

Well, let us make preparations then for a day on the water; lads and lasses to form the bulk of the party, and an old one for ballast. We will have a boat not too broad to cut through the water, not so narrow that it would turn us over the first time we ran foul of an obstruction. We will put in the boat some stout oars for the boys to have plenty of scope for hard strong pulling, and a pair of sculls for the girls. Moreover we will have a cradle for the old one, who always feels a younster again when he is on the water, and a snug hamper, containing articles which would make your mouths water to name, under his special vigilance, simply because he remembers a legend about a certain John Horner. We will have some fishing-rods as well, and a can of worms, a rake, some ground bait, and a landing-net in case of need. And now, if you think we have enough provision for the day, let us be off.

Getting in and starting are two important points in the day's proceedings. "Who's to be stroke-oar? Who's to be bow? Mr. Merry, will you trim the boat, please? Wo-o! too heavy to starboard. No, no, don't move so much; too heavy to port." Then comes a tussle of words about being portly, and requests for the steerer to part his hair down the middle to keep the boat steady. Of course all the boys want to hand each girl into the boat, and the boat heels to one side and the girls say, "Oh! we're upset!" and the boys say, "Oh! we're not!" At last we get settled, and when the word is given, "Push

her head off," everybody asks, "Who's to be the victim?"

The coxswain has now to keep his eyes open and his crew in order. No. 1 pulls as if he were going to show Oxford and Cambridge how sixty strokes can be done in a minute, and he gets the word, "No. 1, steady;" whereupon he pulls with a slow, measured pace, which throws the others out, and the general command follows, "Time—all together, boys." Ah! that was No. 2, he mistook the wind for the water and caught a crab flying. No. 2 says directly, his oar must have touched the weeds, but nobody sees any weeds which he could possibly have touched, so the coxswain remarks, "If anybody catches a crab, stick to it." It is amusing to watch No. 3. He has been used to sea rowing, and lifts his oar high out of the water as if he were afraid of hitting a wave—the boys call the movement sky-scraping—and then plunges it into the water till the blade is out of sight, and this they call taking soundings. But he holds his oar with a firm grasp, and he looks as if he were in a life-boat, and the destinies of a whole ship's crew hung upon his endeavours. No. 4 rows with great precision. If he talks, he talks in time; if he joins in the song, he regulates his rowing to the music; if he looks abroad, he keeps one eye in the boat, or if the word "Ship your oars" is given, his is dropping by the side in the twinkling of an eye.

So goes the day. The girls dabble their hands in the

water, cheer on the boys with their chorus of "Row, brothers, row," or if anybody catches a good crab, they immediately start up with, "See our oars with feathered *spray*." They throw biscuits to the swans, and all tell wonderful stories about those birds,—how they can upset a boat or break a man's arm with a stroke of their strong wings; how the swans often fight and kill one another, and accomplish the cruel feat by the stronger getting its wing over the neck of the weaker, and then holding its head under the water till it is drowned; and how swans have been known to fight for six or seven hours at a stretch.

And when the rowers are tired, we pull up our boat alongside the sloping green banks. Some go ashore to fish, some fish from the boat, and some go to light a fire and boil a kettle for the "spread" which is to take place by-and-by. What a pleasant recreation the fishing is! First we try for gudgeon, and the boys rake away till the water is discoloured—"combing the fishes' hair," they call it. Hardly have our floats begun to swim, than there is a gentle nibble, a sudden bob, and up comes Master Gudgeon all alive and kicking. Perhaps two fish are caught at the same moment, and then what eagerness to get them unhooked, trim the bait, and let down again to see who will be first in catching the next. And Mr. Perch comes leisurely along, debating with himself whether he shall be like the early bird, and pick up the worm; and when he decides that he will, and makes a grab at it, away runs the float, the reel begins to spin, all are in excitement in the boat, and at last his bright scales flash in the sunlight,

and they put him where "poor pussy" was, and would like to be again, in the well, singing the ding-dong-dell of Mr. Perch.

Evening comes on, and we come home. But what a happy red-letter day we have had! Our muscles have been exercised, our skill and science have been taxed, our hearts have been overflowing with delight at all the beauties we have seen, and our jocular veins have been tickled with all we have heard, and we have all declared that a better day's fun could not possibly have been provided for us than on the water.

Youngsters don't moralize much, but they are good-hearted enough to accept the moralizing of an old one. There are many lessons to be learnt in a day's water frolic. It is a good sight to see lads rowing hard against stream, putting all their muscle and vigour in the work to make their boat speed on; it is suggestive to see crabs caught, and the progress of the boat retarded; it is instructive to know that on the river there are swans who can upset the boat altogether, and yet they look so beautiful and pure. Not these only, but a hundred other emblems you can call to mind if you like, and it is always well to enjoy sport as much as we can, and learn the lessons our sports teach us into the bargain.





On Donkeys.

“Every ass loves to hear himself bray.”



AN Ass! Nay, do not laugh. Why should that poor creature always suggest ridiculous notions? I admit there is something comic in his appearance; the ears look as if they had been made for a much larger animal, and had been put on the donkey by mistake; and the coat looks as if it wanted to be taken off, dyed, repaired, and

put on again, to make it really respectable ; and the poor thing looks—looks, in fact, an ass. Who can resist laughing when an ass brays ? There is such a laboured attempt to get the tune the right pitch ; there is in it such a volume of nonsensical sound, such an effort to stop when once it has fairly got into the bray, and such an hysterical gasping, as if the poor thing's sides would split unless he had his bray out, and such absurd under-chuckles when the bray is over, that the whole thing is in keeping with the character of an ass, and we feel bound to laugh at it.

But to my mind there is a good deal of expression in a donkey's face. I once saw a portfolio of sketches of asses in different attitudes, and the countenance of each was as different from the others as yours from mine ; since then I never meet an ass without looking him full in the face, to try and find out what his particular turn of mind is. Some are grave featured, as if they felt life a burden ; some jocular, as if they thought it a fine thing to be caricatures of human nature ; some meditative, as if they knew they were the morals of fables ; some sober-minded and sad with the resignation of martyrs stamped on their features. But most donkeys seem to have a good deal of quiet fun in them ; there is a comic expression about the twinkling eye and screwed-up mouth, giving the idea that they are gloating over some first-rate joke. We only know of one real ass ever speaking, and that was on a solemn occasion when a joke would have been altogether out of place ; but I can't help thinking that if all animals were to have the gift of speech,

the ass would say the drollest and most laughable things of them all.

The history of the ass may be traced back centuries before that of the horse. They have not always been the poor, ill-treated, despised creatures they are now. The wealthy patriarchs set great store by them; Job reckoned among his possessions "a thousand she-asses;" Saul, the "choice young man and goodly," was not ashamed to go and seek his father's asses, and bring them back; kings and princes rode upon them; merchants traded for them, and every householder reckoned them among the treasures of his property. And coming down [to more modern and yet far distant times, we find that there was even then a far greater veneration for donkeys than there is now. I need not remind you that the King of kings made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass, according to the prophecy. And there are many ignorant and superstitious people in the country, that you may meet with every day in the week, who will tell you that the dark cross upon the back of the ass was miraculously impressed there when He rode, and has been seen on all asses ever since. Later still, it was a custom in many parts of Europe to celebrate this event, and on Palm Sunday a wooden ass, mounted on wheels, with a wooden figure on its back, was drawn through the cities and towns, and the people would bring flowers and garlands to strew in the path. And so great was the darkness and superstition of those times, that it was thought if anybody pre-

served a twig or a branch over which the wooden ass had been drawn, they would never be hurt by fire, or lightning, or storms.

But of all nonsensical things, the Feast of the Ass was the most nonsensical. That feast used to be celebrated when people were not educated as we are now, and books were things almost unheard of. The priests thought the people should be taught by pictures and plays, and the Feast of the Ass was a dramatic exhibition to illustrate the flight into Egypt. A donkey bearing a lady, with a child in her arms, was led through the city, and when the procession reached the church, the ass was led up to the altar, and then the service commenced. At the conclusion of the service, the priest, instead of giving the benediction, brayed three times, and the whole congregation, instead of saying Amen, responded with a furious hee-haw! In the book from whence I derive this information, the hymn is preserved which the choristers sang on the occasion, the chorus being the hee-haw sung lustily by the people. The hymn is in nine verses, so I will only give you two as specimens:—

From the country of the East
 Came this strong and handsome beast ;
 This able ass, beyond compare,
 Heavy loads and packs to bear.

Now, Seignior Ass, a *noble* bray
 Thy beauteous mouth at large display ;
 Abundant food our haylofts yield,
 And oats abundant load the field.

Hee-haw ! hee-haw ! hee-haw !

With your belly full of grain,
 Bray, most honoured Ass, Amen ;
 Bray out loudly, bray again,
 Never mind the old Amen.
 Without ceasing bray again,
 Amen ! Amen ! Amen ! Amen !
 Hee-haw ! hee-haw ! hee-haw !

Thank goodness, all these absurdities are over now. The change is good for us but bad for the donkey. Now, the Festival of the Ass is kept up all through the summer on Hampstead Heath and Primrose Hill, but he has all the hard work and few of the "oats abundant which load the field." The jewelled trappings which once decked his back, are exchanged for the white cloth which hides the dirty saddle ; instead of kings riding upon him, young pretenders out for half-holiday larks mount him, and think themselves—

"Monarchs of all they survey."

But even greater than this is the change that has come to donkey-life. Costermongers are now the greatest donkey holders in the land, and we have not to walk far to see how brutally the poor things are used, what cruel work they have to do, and what horrid society they have to mix with. "Give an ass an ill name and ill-treat him." Is it to be wondered at, that the donkey, remembering what he once was, and what he now is, should be dull and demure, and keep all his jokes to his own quiet world within? I confess I have a respect for donkeys, and should like to join a crusade for the vindication of their rights. I have not

much faith in St. Anthony, but I wish some of us had the virtues ascribed to him. It is said that he took all the lower beasts under his protection, and at an annual festival called "The Benediction of Beasts," he blessed all the mules and asses and pigs sent to him, for a very small sum, and that secured them protection for a year.

But I would ask you when you go donkey-riding, to remember the past history of the animal you bestride, and lay to heart the moral of that hackneyed old song, which as you know, is rendered in modern English thus :

If I had a ridiculous animal that would not make speed,
Do you think I'd chastise it? Not I, indeed!
I'd furnish it with provender, and remark, "Proceed!
Walk along, Edward!"





On Spectacles.

"There are none so blind as those that won't see."

BARON FAR having decided long ago in Cowper's "Report of an adjudged case not to be found in any of the books," as to whether spectacles rightfully belong to the nose or the eyes, it would be unwise to submit the case for your decision, and take your "Noes" or "Ayes." Neither will we inquire who should wear spectacles and who should not. We may have our doubts whether spectacles are needful to all the German students with long hair we meet, or all the young ministers with their crisp white ties. We may wonder why so many young men are affected with obliquity of vision in one eye only, so as to make the use of an eye-glass necessary. We may not understand why lecturers and public speakers dangle double eye-glasses in their hands and never use them unless they have lost their place, or come to a word in their manuscript they can't make out. We may not see why doctors who wear broad-brimmed hats and creaking boots should also wear gold spectacles. Nor may we quite make out why old ladies in rustling silks should use both eyes to look through one gold-mounted magnifying glass

at church, and not use it for ordinary purposes at home. All these questions, however, have nothing to do with us, and therefore we pass them by, and leave the people to use their spectacles how they like, and to make spectacles of themselves if they are so minded.

We will briefly glance at some of the kinds of spectacles that are worn, and look through them with our mind's eye in a figurative point of view.

1. *Dark Spectacles.*—Many wear them, and the design is to keep out the sunshine. Some people like to look at the dark side of everything. They see, or think they see, that passing events are leading the nation and every individual in it to ruin. The characters of their fellow-creatures are reviewed through dark spectacles, and the sunlight of love, the bright star of hope, the flashes of fun are all mellowed down or eclipsed. The actions of others are never seen in the light, there is always a cloud hanging over the brightest deed, and a sombre shade over the most genial smile. Let who may wear dark spectacles—we won't. Welcome to our eyes the bright sunshine of life! The evening and the morning make the day, so there must be darkness sometimes; but while the sun shines, and its glad beams are around us, we will try to see passing events, the characters of our friends, the bright world with its glorious scenes and noble deeds, in their true light.

2. *Green Spectacles.*—To the person who wears them everybody else looks *green* (as the shavings looked like grass to the horse, through the green spectacles which his economical master had put on him). Old people often wear them, and

think because they have gone through the world and learnt its experiences, all the younger members of the generation are verdant novices. Boys in the upper schools and classes wear them when they look down upon and patronize the juniors. And girls wear them when they have left boarding school and know how to cut a dash before their wondering little sisters. Take another view of the question. Everybody has heard of the "Green-eyed Monster;" some people with their green spectacles may be fairly so called. There are those in the world who look on every happiness, every innocent joy, every motion of love, with a jealous eye, vexed because the world was not created for them, and because they have not room in the little charnel-houses that hold their hearts, to take in all the love that floats like sunlight through the world. Ugh! Save us from wearing green spectacles! We would wish to think others are no greener than ourselves, and give them credit for knowing as much as we do; and we would wish to have our hearts full of joy, but never envy or jealousy of the joys of others.

3. *Near-sight Spectacles.*—The design of these spectacles is to see objects which are far off; those near at hand being distinct without their use. How many wear these! That boy puts them on who is ever thinking what he shall do when he is a man, and is forgetting that he will only be what he qualifies himself to be in the days that are close at hand. That girl wears them who is always going to do something to-morrow and forgets the duties of to-day. Strange it is that so many people who do not know one scrap about what is in

the future, will make a future in their imaginations and live in it when there are a hundred thousand real things to demand their time and thought and energy in the present. The idler, who is always staring about for the middle of next week, does it with the aid of near-sight spectacles. So we will not wear these, but be content with what time we have, and that is, *to-day*.

Now take your choice as to what spectacles you will wear to view life with. Select those which will best show you the beauties and glories of character in others, and love in everything. Those which will help you to see faults in yourselves as well as in others, and enable you to "see through a milestone as well as most people." But never use those which throw a dark shadow over the bright landscape, or prevent you seeing people and things in their true colours, or help you so to look into the future as to take off your attention from the present.







"ONE MAN'S FALL IS ANOTHER MAN'S LESSON." *See p. 65.*



Scenes from the Lives of Jack and Jill.

“One man’s fall is another man’s lesson.”

“**H**ERE is a history in all men’s lives,” says Shakespeare. Some, however, are doomed never to come to the light, while some are familiar to the whole world. There are those whose actions are recorded from the cradle to the grave, and there are those whose histories are immortalized by a single action, who flash before the world like meteors, and are gone. To the latter class, Jack and Jill belong. Their memories are cherished from generation to generation; the exploit which has rendered them famous is one of the first biographical lessons learnt by the youthful British mind; and even in old age, when the Histories of Greece, Rome, or England, have ceased to be cared for or remembered, the hoary-headed man’s eyes sparkle as he hears his grand-children narrate the thrilling adventure on the hill, and the crowning sequel.

After careful research among the most respectable authorities (to say nothing of the British Museum), we are prepared to disprove many popular fallacies with regard to our hero and heroine. There is no authority for supposing

that Wordsworth's "Excursion" was borrowed from the plot of this story, nor that Jilkicker was the birthplace of our heroine, nor that Jack's mother was the founder of "The College for Female Doctors."

But there is good authority for the following deductions :—

The young couple lived in humble life, otherwise they would not have been engaged on the errand for which they are famed. Early in life they were thrown on the world, and the good dame took them up. They had their trials, as we all have, and their first exploit happened while they were in the exercise of up-hill work. They were probably sweethearts, as we may gather from the fact that they were employed on a labour of love ; and one of the lessons of their lives may be to show that the course of true love never did run smooth.

There is a veil of mystery hanging over the motives which induced them to ascend a hill to procure water. Some suggest that the youthful pair started forth early in the morning, and the song of the lark inspired a larkish spirit in them, while the pleased *ejaculations* of one aided the *agzity* of the other. At last the well was found, and Jack gallantly bore off the pail of water.

"What a pale face you have," said Jill, as she saw him panting with his burden ; and no sooner had she said it than Jack stumbled and fell. Bounding forward to the rescue, Jill kicked the bucket with her light, fantastic toe, upset her equilibrium and the pail, and followed Jack in his perilous descent.

The sad sequel is soon told. Jack rose from his lowly spot, considerably spotted; and summoning all his energy, went home—to use the language of the history—“As fast as he could caper.” There the good dame dressed his wounds with the soothing plaster of vinegar and brown paper; and here the curtain of mystery again falls, history is silent, imagination is left alone.

* * * * *

It is a fallacy to suppose that there ever was a life from which nothing could be learnt. It is equally fallacious to suppose that a good sermon depends upon a good text. A certain itinerant preacher once took for his text, “There was a man in Jerusalem,” and he divided his discourse thus: 1. A man—not an ape. 2. A man—not a painted butterfly. 3. A man—not an image. And so his subject grew until he had successfully hit off, in a series of sketches, the heads of the people, besides putting a good deal of common sense into the heads of his discourse and his hearers.

From the history of the lives of Jack and Jill we may learn, without doing violence to the story, two things:—

1. The folly of seeking in unlikely places. Up a hill does not seem the best place for procuring a pail of water, and the sequel shows that even when the water was obtained, it could not be brought into practical use. Some people seek to get on in the world by always looking out for lucky chances. That is the wrong road,—steady industry is the plain path, and even if they get the realization of their hopes, the chances are ten to one that they

will turn out like Jack's pail of water. Some seek knowledge by a royal road—learn “French without a master,” “Music without the aid of notes,” and so on. They seek in unlikely places, and when the time comes to apply what they have obtained to practical purposes, they find their systems fall to the ground. Some seek truth in systems of error : it is searching for needles in bottles of hay—seeking water up a hill. They may find it, but they find it in such out-of-the places that they cannot carry it away with them. Some say it lies at the bottom of a well, and they seek to dive down there for it. But truth never *lies*, it is in activity all around us : There let us seek it, and “Leave well alone.”

The fall of Jack led to the fall of Jill. If you see “Dreadful murder” in the paper to-day, you will be sure to see “Dreadful murder” there again to-morrow. If there is one great bankruptcy to-day, there will be another great bankruptcy to-morrow. If there is robbery and violence in a railway carriage to-day, there will be the same again to-morrow. Why? Because there is contagion in influence, and there are fashions in morals as there are in dress. Why does foot-ball come in and chevy-chase go out in all the schools in the kingdom about the same time? Because what one does others do. Mutinies, wars, rebellions, are the result of individual opinions spread among the masses. And we do well to consider what effect the influence of others has upon us, and what effect our influence has upon others. If we rise in the world, others will rise with us ; if we fall, others will fall too.



"A little leak will sink a great ship."

ONE night a ship was tossing about on the waters near Cape Horn. The weather was bitterly cold, but notwithstanding that, the passengers were assembled on the decks in large numbers. Although it was between ten and eleven o'clock, and the cold was like the depth of winter, it was still broad daylight. A motley group stood on the forecastle, wrapped up in shawls and blankets, and vainly they stamped on the deck to put warmth into their feet. What was the attraction, think you, which kept them up there, instead of being snugly tucked up in their berths? The ship was surrounded by icebergs, and some of the passengers were full of fear lest they should run foul of the vessel. But the bold and the timid were alike admiring those beautiful crystal islands, rising three and four hundred feet from the water, and glistening in the rays of the declining sun. There is scarcely a finer sight to be seen in the great world of waters than a group of icebergs—some with towers of curious shape, some with valleys running in between the hills, and others with great caverns washed out by the sea. Sometimes imagination can picture old castles and ruined towers in the frozen mass, and here and

there small stray pieces of ice have all the appearance of human beings frozen to death.

Of course it is a dangerous and anxious time when a ship is among icebergs, and the passengers listen attentively to the call of the "look-out" as he reports their bearings; and as the repeated cries of the captain and mate to alter sail and wear ship ring along the decks, the nervous folks are apt to wish the glorious icebergs were farther off. But the real danger is not in meeting large icebergs which are miles long, and have mountain peaks towering up to heaven; everybody can see them, and the ship can soon be "put about" out of their way. The real danger is in running foul of floating masses which have been worn down by the washing of the water, and lie deep, but do not appear above the waves.

On the ship of which I am speaking, it happened that while all were looking on the white hills around, and were feeling secure as they saw them at a good distance off, all at once there was a jerk, and many went reeling on the deck. Above the hurried exclamations of the frightened ones there was heard a loud grinding noise—the ship had run on some ice, which, with every wave, rubbed and ground against the vessel's side. The dexterous captain soon got his ship out of the difficulty, and careful search was made in the hold to see if any damage was done. All was reported to be safe. But one passenger as he lay in his berth, hours afterwards, heard a noise which disturbed him. It was like the gentle falling and splashing of water. Keep-

ing his alarm to himself, he jumped up and dressed, and made his way down to the hold as fast as he could. It was knee-deep in water, and when the vessel rolled the water to one side it was breast high! No time was to be lost; a few minutes might be too late; he knew the place where the ice had struck the ship, and there he searched diligently as best he could. As the waters receded with the roll of the vessel, he saw a small stream running down the side. With all his strength and nerve he pulled away the skirting, and there, sure enough, was a little hole not large enough to put his hand through, but large enough to let in as much water as would sink the ship, and cause three hundred lives to be lost. In a moment he had torn his coat into shreds and stopped up the hole; and there he remained, singing out lustily, "Hi! holloa!" until his cries were heard and assistance came. And so the ship was saved.

Well, you say, a very noble deed, and worthy of the true pluck of an Englishman; but as we are not all likely to go to sea and stop up a leak, we can only admire without doing likewise.

Here I catch you, then, running foul of a fallacy. Have you never heard of the voyage of life? Are we not all on that voyage? Then a voyage supposes a sea, and a sea supposes a ship. Somebody has said,—

"Life is an ocean, years the tide
That floats ten thousand barks along;
Sins are the rocks on every side,
Where passion drives a current strong."

And this supposes cases of leakage.

A youth one sabbath-day talked with his friend. The blue sky was above them, and the river glided along at their feet, the birds carolled their glad songs, the breeze stirred the foliage, and caused it to break forth into soft, sweet music ; all was beautiful and fair. "This is God !" said the friend, "and every minute thing around is a separate revelation. Here is the true temple of God, in which the spirit may worship."

"It is very beautiful," answered the youth, "and the soul seems to expand while gazing on all this glory which God has Himself declared to be 'very good.' But there is a 'glory that excelleth !'"

Words gendered words, thoughts taxed more thoughts, and the argument was long and animated. The youth listened eagerly to false teachings about God, and pondered for many days and weeks on what he had heard. He had struck upon a rock : that conversation caused the leak ; it was not stopped in time. Slowly but surely the waters came in unto his soul, and at last the ship was sunk. He made shipwreck of faith !

"He who steals a pin will live to steal a greater thing," said a grandmother to a little chap not higher than the table. And the little chap believed it, and every pin lying on the floor was a sermon to him on the commandment. But though every pin was a sermon, every sweetmeat-shop was a temptation ; and while that youngster maintained a veneration for the pin, he was not so clear that its moral applied to the halfpenny he found lying on the floor.

And did not another maxim say "Losings, seekings; findings, keepings"? So he kept the halfpenny.

Years and years after, when he was a man, he sat lonely and sad in a foreign land; around him were men of all ranks and conditions, all, like himself, doing menial work, all wearing the same garb, all branded with crime. And as he looked along the clouded pathway of life, he cried, "That ha'penny did it!" That was the little leak which had made shipwreck of honour.

If you had known Ned Harper, you would have said he was the jolliest fellow you ever met in your life. It was a treat to see his merry face all agog with smiles, and to hear his laugh, which would be sure to make you go into a spasm of "Ha ha's!" even though you were not perfectly conscious as to what you were laughing about. He could make puns till words only stood for jokes. And at every sport he put such spirit and life into it, that all the lads said "sport wasn't sport unless Ned Harper had a hand in it." Ned was well brought up, well educated, and a lad of high feeling and good principle. If he heard a low, coarse expression, he would redden up to the temples; he would "cut" the companion who allowed "a filthy communication to proceed out of his mouth;" he scorned the paltry wretch who would chuckle over subjects which "should not so much as be named."

But Ned possessed a terrible power—the ability to joke well. It was his bane; and while the base, immodest expression shocked him, the same evil clothed in the sparkling raiment of wit did not appear the same thing. He found, too,

And this supposes cases of leakage.

A youth one sabbath-day talked with his friend. The blue sky was above them, and the river glided along at their feet, the birds carolled their glad songs, the breeze stirred the foliage, and caused it to break forth into soft, sweet music ; all was beautiful and fair. "This is God !" said the friend, "and every minute thing around is a separate revelation. Here is the true temple of God, in which the spirit may worship."

"It is very beautiful," answered the youth, "and the soul seems to expand while gazing on all this glory which God has Himself declared to be 'very good.' But there is a 'glory that excelleth !'"

Words gendered words, thoughts taxed more thoughts, and the argument was long and animated. The youth listened eagerly to false teachings about God, and pondered for many days and weeks on what he had heard. He had struck upon a rock : that conversation caused the leak ; it was not stopped in time. Slowly but surely the waters came in unto his soul, and at last the ship was sunk. He made shipwreck of faith !

"He who steals a pin will live to steal a greater thing," said a grandmother to a little chap not higher than the table. And the little chap believed it, and every pin lying on the floor was a sermon to him on the commandment. But though every pin was a sermon, every sweetmeat-shop was a temptation ; and while that youngster maintained a veneration for the pin, he was not so clear that its moral applied to the halfpenny he found lying on the floor.

And did not another maxim say "Losings, seekings; findings, keepings"? So he kept the halfpenny.

Years and years after, when he was a man, he sat lonely and sad in a foreign land; around him were men of all ranks and conditions, all, like himself, doing menial work, all wearing the same garb, all branded with crime. And as he looked along the clouded pathway of life, he cried, "That ha'penny did it!" That was the little leak which had made shipwreck of honour.

If you had known Ned Harper, you would have said he was the jolliest fellow you ever met in your life. It was a treat to see his merry face all agog with smiles, and to hear his laugh, which would be sure to make you go into a spasm of "Ha ha's!" even though you were not perfectly conscious as to what you were laughing about. He could make puns till words only stood for jokes. And at every sport he put such spirit and life into it, that all the lads said "sport wasn't sport unless Ned Harper had a hand in it." Ned was well brought up, well educated, and a lad of high feeling and good principle. If he heard a low, coarse expression, he would redden up to the temples; he would "cut" the companion who allowed "a filthy communication to proceed out of his mouth;" he scorned the paltry wretch who would chuckle over subjects which "should not so much as be named."

But Ned possessed a terrible power—the ability to joke well. It was his bane; and while the base, immodest expression shocked him, the same evil clothed in the sparkling raiment of wit did not appear the same thing. He found, too,

And this supposes cases of leakage.

A youth one sabbath-day talked with his friend. The blue sky was above them, and the river glided along at their feet, the birds carolled their glad songs, the breeze stirred the foliage, and caused it to break forth into soft, sweet music ; all was beautiful and fair. "This is God !" said the friend, "and every minute thing around is a separate revelation. Here is the true temple of God, in which the spirit may worship."

"It is very beautiful," answered the youth, "and the soul seems to expand while gazing on all this glory which God has Himself declared to be 'very good.' But there is a 'glory that excelleth !'"

Words gendered words, thoughts taxed more thoughts, and the argument was long and animated. The youth listened eagerly to false teachings about God, and pondered for many days and weeks on what he had heard. He had struck upon a rock : that conversation caused the leak ; it was not stopped in time. Slowly but surely the waters came in unto his soul, and at last the ship was sunk. He made shipwreck of faith !

"He who steals a pin will live to steal a greater thing," said a grandmother to a little chap not higher than the table. And the little chap believed it, and every pin lying on the floor was a sermon to him on the commandment. But though every pin was a sermon, every sweetmeat-shop was a temptation ; and while that youngster maintained a veneration for the pin, he was not so clear that its moral applied to the halfpenny he found lying on the floor.

And did not another maxim say "Losings, seekings; findings, keepings"? So he kept the halfpenny.

Years and years after, when he was a man, he sat lonely and sad in a foreign land; around him were men of all ranks and conditions, all, like himself, doing menial work, all wearing the same garb, all branded with crime. And as he looked along the clouded pathway of life, he cried, "That ha'penny did it!" That was the little leak which had made shipwreck of honour.

If you had known Ned Harper, you would have said he was the jolliest fellow you ever met in your life. It was a treat to see his merry face all agog with smiles, and to hear his laugh, which would be sure to make you go into a spasm of "Ha ha's!" even though you were not perfectly conscious as to what you were laughing about. He could make puns till words only stood for jokes. And at every sport he put such spirit and life into it, that all the lads said "sport wasn't sport unless Ned Harper had a hand in it." Ned was well brought up, well educated, and a lad of high feeling and good principle. If he heard a low, coarse expression, he would redden up to the temples; he would "cut" the companion who allowed "a filthy communication to proceed out of his mouth;" he scorned the paltry wretch who would chuckle over subjects which "should not so much as be named."

But Ned possessed a terrible power—the ability to joke well. It was his bane; and while the base, immodest expression shocked him, the same evil clothed in the sparkling raiment of wit did not appear the same thing. He found, too,

And this supposes cases of leakage.

A youth one sabbath-day talked with his friend. The blue sky was above them, and the river glided along at their feet, the birds carolled their glad songs, the breeze stirred the foliage, and caused it to break forth into soft, sweet music ; all was beautiful and fair. "This is God !" said the friend, "and every minute thing around is a separate revelation. Here is the true temple of God, in which the spirit may worship."

"It is very beautiful," answered the youth, "and the soul seems to expand while gazing on all this glory which God has Himself declared to be 'very good.' But there is a 'glory that excelleth !'"

Words gendered words, thoughts taxed more thoughts, and the argument was long and animated. The youth listened eagerly to false teachings about God, and pondered for many days and weeks on what he had heard. He had struck upon a rock : that conversation caused the leak ; it was not stopped in time. Slowly but surely the waters came in unto his soul, and at last the ship was sunk. He made shipwreck of faith !

"He who steals a pin will live to steal a greater thing," said a grandmother to a little chap not higher than the table. And the little chap believed it, and every pin lying on the floor was a sermon to him on the commandment. But though every pin was a sermon, every sweetmeat-shop was a temptation ; and while that youngster maintained a veneration for the pin, he was not so clear that its moral applied to the halfpenny he found lying on the floor.

And did not another maxim say "Losings, seekings; findings, keepings"? So he kept the halfpenny.

Years and years after, when he was a man, he sat lonely and sad in a foreign land; around him were men of all ranks and conditions, all, like himself, doing menial work, all wearing the same garb, all branded with crime. And as he looked along the clouded pathway of life, he cried, "That ha'penny did it!" That was the little leak which had made shipwreck of honour.

If you had known Ned Harper, you would have said he was the jolliest fellow you ever met in your life. It was a treat to see his merry face all agog with smiles, and to hear his laugh, which would be sure to make you go into a spasm of "Ha ha's!" even though you were not perfectly conscious as to what you were laughing about. He could make puns till words only stood for jokes. And at every sport he put such spirit and life into it, that all the lads said "sport wasn't sport unless Ned Harper had a hand in it." Ned was well brought up, well educated, and a lad of high feeling and good principle. If he heard a low, coarse expression, he would redden up to the temples; he would "cut" the companion who allowed "a filthy communication to proceed out of his mouth;" he scorned the paltry wretch who would chuckle over subjects which "should not so much as be named."

But Ned possessed a terrible power—the ability to joke well. It was his bane; and while the base, immodest expression shocked him, the same evil clothed in the sparkling raiment of wit did not appear the same thing. He found, too,

that the jokes which called forth the loudest laughter were always those which were founded on Scripture or immoralities. Alas ! there was the leak that made shipwreck of virtue !

You would not know Ned Harper now. Yes, perhaps you might. Perhaps some night you may recognise him in the street, and you will be shocked, as I have been, to see the bloated face, the trembling hand, and the bloodshot eye. And if you do meet him, lads, stop an instant ; do not gaze rudely or unkindly, but look at him well, and remember that whatever you are now, however virtuous and noble-hearted you may be, however you may scorn your licentious companion, if you think lightly and speak lightly of those gross sins which shock man and anger God, you will one day be another Ned Harper.

Little leaks ! hasty words—trifling sins—forbidden fruits—unfettered thoughts—neglected prayers—sighted Bibles. Alas, alas ! how many noble ships they have sunk !





Be Something.

“Every man is the architect of his own fortune.”



ONE day I visited a very large mercantile establishment, and accompanied by a friend who held an influential position there, went through all the different departments. There were about 200 gentlemen, knights of the quill, engaged in all sorts of ways, and they all seemed very busy over their accounts and writings. One room was devoted to supernumerary or “extra” clerks. They were for the most part young lads who were not appointed on the establishment, but were in a probationary state; and if they distinguished themselves by showing business tact, they stood a good chance of being promoted to clerkships. I was surprised to see at a desk where a lot of mere lads, or very young men, were at work, an old greyheaded gentleman, with a long grey beard. At first I thought he was one of the chief clerks, but as I stood talking to my friend I saw that he was engaged on exactly the same work the lads were doing.

“Who is that old gentleman?” I said aside to my friend; “surely he is not one of your extras?”

“I am sorry to say he is, poor old man! When he came into the office,—and he was taken more as service to him than for any service he was likely to be to us; for, of course, young blood can beat old blood at work,—I gave him the usual paper to fill up, which requires the age of the candidate, references as to respectability, and so on. One space is for ‘usual occupation,’ and I found he had left it blank. When I asked him what his usual occupation was, he told me in a word the history of his life. With a very sad smile he said, ‘The occupation of my life has been nil.’”

“What a melancholy history!” I said. “But do you know more of him?”

“Oh yes; we had a long talk. He told me he had been educated for the law, but he never took to it, and when he had a chance to start in life, he embarked in a business which he did not understand, and after a short time he failed. Then he found an engagement as tutor, and travelled abroad a great deal. Then, when he settled down in England again, he married and kept a school, but the school was not enough to keep him, and he had to try other means for a livelihood. And so, tossed about from one thing to another, without success in anything, he is now a supernumerary in this office, receiving the same salary and doing the same work as those lads you see there. He said truly, the occupation of his life had been nil; and yet he is a man of very superior education, and had he only stuck to one thing, and determined to be something, he would have been in a very different position now.”

Poor old man! it was not in my power to alter his lot, and I

left the office, perhaps never to see or hear of him again. But if I could not do him any good, perhaps I may do good to you by trying to impress on you the lesson he slighted in his youth. Determine, with all the strength and energy of purpose you have, to be something; determine that whatever your hands find to do you will do with all your might; determine that now, while you have the freshness of youth and vigour, while the prospects of life are just opening before you, and while your future is depending, in a great measure, upon what you make it,—that you will plant your foot firmly on the ladder of success; that you will rise step by step, and never take your eyes from the topmost rail; that you will commence the ascent of the hill, even though it be the Hill Difficulty, and never leave off the struggle till you have planted your banner on the summit.

Be something. Are you at school? Then you have got a fair field to work in. A splendid chance of becoming something. Don't rest satisfied till you are best man in your class. Be at its head; be faithful to yourself, and to your friends who have placed you at school. Work at your lessons with a hearty good will; laugh at your difficulties, and overcome them; resolve to gather something from every day's duties, and lay it up in your hive, to sweeten your life when the bright sunshiny school days are over, and your chances of learning are fewer. One lesson well learnt, well digested, and securely stowed away in the storehouse of memory, is so much capital laid up in the bank to work with by-and-by.

Are you in a situation? Then determine to be something

in the house where you are employed. Show that you do not mean to waste life, but that you will, with the help of Providence, work your way up in the world. Do your daily work in a cheerful spirit; throw your heart and soul into it; and don't go through your duties as if they were drudgeries, and as if you thought it a very miserable thing to be obliged to do anything. Show to your employers that you know a hard-working but honest and useful life is worth living for; and take my word for it, the lad who by good conduct shows he is anxious to push himself on, is the one whom an employer will feel it not only his interest but his pleasure to push on too.

Have you several hours a day of leisure time? Lucky fellow if you have? but only lucky if you make a good use of them. You may very often take a youth's leisure hours as a type of what his life will be. If he takes up half-a-dozen books, reads a bit of one and a bit of another, and then throws them aside; if he commences a drawing, and then thinks painting is better, and finally settles he will amuse himself with the concertina; if he dotes on Latin one day, but thinks mathematics will be more useful the next,—what do you suppose his future life will be? Not the steady, plodding life which makes a man happy and prosperous himself, and useful to all around; no, his life will be but the counterpart of the poor old man in the supernumerary office. Our leisure hours ought never to be idle hours, not even if we have been busy all day; because change of occupation is rest, and if we are privileged to have some time in the day which we may fairly call our own, we should be very jealous of it, and re-

solve not to let it go until it has blessed us. Every lad ought to have a hobby for his leisure time, some one thing that he is determined to study and to master. If it is a science, say electricity, know all about it; read and re-read, experimentalize, talk about it, enlist the services of those who can help you, master your subject. Whatever it is, music or drawing, literature or mathematics or languages, stick to it, don't be daunted because it looks dry; say, "I will be something in this study," and depend upon it you will.

Be something! At home or at school, in your situation or in your lesson hours, you have the opportunity, and nothing is wanting but application to make you useful men. I believe that "Fortune knocks at every man's door," and the time when the good dame comes is generally when the tide in men's affairs is flowing out into the great ocean of life, when the bark is being launched for the great voyage, or, in plain terms, when a lad is making his start in life. Then it is that the die is cast, the character is formed, and the daily life is a prophecy of all the life.

And if this is true of one's social chances, how true is it also in relation to higher and better things! Surely in the days of youth, while the evil days come not, while the good influences of home culture are fresh, while the unknown forces of temptation have not assailed you, while religion is yet dear to you, you should determine to—be something. How many thousands there are who are "neither cold nor hot," having the form of godliness without the power, members of the great sect of "Nothingarians"! Will you be like them? No, while

you have the friendship and advice of your teachers and companions in the Bible class, while you see, as you must see, what sin has done, and is doing, in the world, while you know that if you gain the whole world, and become its greatest man, and yet lose your own soul, it profiteth nothing,—determine in the strength of God, to be something in His service.

Don't think, my lads, that I want to make you dull and gloomy, and put old heads on young shoulders. Nothing of the sort. I only want to show you how much better it is to look forward to life, and say, "I will be something," than to look back and say, "The occupation of my life has been nil."





“It’s only my style.”

“A crooked tree will have a crooked shadow.”

NO two people are exactly alike, though many have the same style of face. No two people think alike, though hundreds have the same style of thought. Everybody has, therefore, or ought to have, individuality ; that is, according to Johnson’s Dictionary, “distinct existence,” or, according to my notion, a style of his own. But young folks have to acquire this ; and I need not tell you they model their characters and form their styles from observing those around them. Imitation is as natural to young people as to monkeys, and I shouldn’t be surprised if that is the reason why they are so often called “young monkeys.”

Now I want you to be especially careful how you copy, and whom you copy, and to be sure and satisfy yourselves, before you adopt a style, that it is worth your while to do it, and that it will be an ornament to your character. I shall point out one or two things which it will be well to avoid imitating, and that may assist you to know what to imitate.

Styles of speech.—Some people never speak without exaggeration ; and this becomes such a habit, that half their

conversation borders on untruth. Here are some examples : " I was so tired, I thought I should have died on the spot ; " " I was so thirsty, I could have drunk up the river ; " " The boat was so light, that if I hadn't had my hair parted in the middle it would have upset ; " " The road was so muddy, I was up to my eyebrows in it all the way. " The evil of this style of speech is, that the line between the real and the false is trodden down, and the honest appreciation of " the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, " is slowly but surely sacrificed. Another style is that which sounds a good deal like swearing—" Confound it ! " " Drat it ! " How frequently such terms as these are indulged in ! " They don't mean anything, " you say. Perhaps not ; but how faint a line there is between such words and actual words of swearing, which often mean nothing by those who use them. There is great absurdity, too, apart from wrong. Why Jove, or rather Jupiter, should be so popular, I am at a loss to know. He never did any good for us, and never will. Yet some people never attempt to do anything without saying, " By Jove, I'll do it ! " or " By Jove, I'll have a try ! " Why the visual organs should be associated with the name of Elizabeth Martin, or why the influence of the wind should be so often invoked upon another, are mysteries to me. Why Hanover and Jericho should be selected as places for so many to visit I never could understand ; and as for Gillkicker, there is no such place noted in my atlas. The evil of this style is that the horror we ought to feel at disregarding the command, " Swear not at all, " is weakened, and the right to reprove an actual swearer becomes questionable. Here is

the standard: "Let your communication be, Yea, yea, and Nay, nay;" and "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good."

Styles of dress.—"An unimportant matter," say you. I flatly deny it. Dress is as much an index of the mind as countenance; in some cases more so; and dress oftentimes indicates that there is no mind. I believe that imitation in dress is a terrible temptation to many; and there are multitudes who would feel more uncomfortable to be in plain attire among gaudy folk, than to be in intellectual society with poor acquirements. I believe there are many who would rather choose a well-dressed companion than a clever one. I don't want you to be regardless of attire, but never copy dandyism.

Look at that young man coming along the street. He wears a white hat with a black band; a collar which ruffles the choler of any sensible person to behold; a magenta thread which represents a necktie; a coat which terminates where the waist ought to be; checked trousers which would do very well to play chess upon; and boots which a Chinese might envy; and that young man walks the streets a gratuitous advertisement to his tailor. Better for him if he could change places with one of those waxen-faced "dummies" with blackleaded boots which grace the windows of Messrs. Moses, Simeon, or Levy; better for him to have been a wandering savage than to be a mere dandy, with all his mind in his body, and that the laughing-stock of sensible folk. And every dandy flaunting about in his gay colours has "warranted fast" written upon him, a brand which makes all who are careful about companionship shun

him. It is a dogmatic assertion, perhaps, that there is nothing more contemptible than puppyism, but it is true. Therefore don't covet a foppish style of dress. Have a nobler ambition than "I'd be a butterfly." Do not imagine I recommend you to be singular in your costume, and advise you to dress like paupers ; on the contrary, I think we ought always to exercise our taste, and make ourselves look as respectable as we can ; for slovenliness in attire is nearly as bad, in excess, as overcare and dandyism. Imitate those who are not absorbed in outward appearance, and "whose adorning is not that outward adorning of putting on of apparel, but the hidden man of the heart."

Styles of manner.—"Wanted, a youth of good address," says the advertisement ; and if a youth swaggers into the office to apply for the situation with all the bombast of a man of forty ; if he describes his capabilities with the air of one who fancies he knows everything and can do everything ; if he exhibits a style which is sometimes called "slap-dash,"—the chances are nearly sure to be that his services will be declined. A respectful modesty of manner does not characterize every youth. There is a style which is very common, of being boisterous and loud ; talking great swelling words ; looking down upon everybody else ; esteeming no one better than themselves ; placing themselves in the front of every picture, and all the rest of the world in the background ; making "I, myself," the great centre of life. "It's only mannerism," you say. That's all ; but don't imitate it, it is not becoming. Some people are sharp and surly, never say a civil word if something rough will answer the purpose ; address equals as inferiors, and superiors

as equals. Take any specimen of the class and trace his history. He was a little tyrant in the nursery, a bully in the school, a terror to all the small boys in the neighbourhood, and a pest at home. Such a youth could never turn out a gentleman; and however much he may win admiration from those who are kindred with him in spirit, he is for all that a pest to society, and certainly unworthy of imitation.

There are human bears, and snakes, and foxes, and doves; there are men who are mere machinery or animated statues; there are men without manners, and men with, who would be better if they were without. There are styles easy, stiff, familiar, cold, warm, formal, commonplace, eccentric, and a thousand other varieties. Our choice, therefore, is large; but let us choose that style which will most endear us to man, and reflect honour upon Him who created us "in His image." Our success in life and our usefulness in the world depend much upon the cultivation of manner. Seek to be courteous and kind, never rough and uncouth, nor fawning and cringing. Be frank, honest, unreserved, for these are virtues, but only virtues as they are ruled by the law of kindness and forbearance.

Important as it is for us to have a style of our own in speech and dress and manners, these are but minor points compared with our style of living. I do not mean by that what we eat and drink, but the inclination of our whole thinking, acting life. Is pleasure our style? Are we like those who think that time is given us only to be amused away? who make pleasure a goddess, and dedicate their lives to her service? Is gaiety our style? Are we like those who shun a

serious thought as if it were a foe, and look upon life as if it were a capital joke?

Some prevailing style rules every life. Let ours be that which will most enable us to enjoy the beauties and real pleasures of the life that now is, and look forward with joy to the life which is to come.





Where are we now ?

"Praise a fair day at night."

NO doubt you have sometimes placed yourself in the doorway, with your heels together and your body erect, while somebody with a pencil has drawn a line to mark your height ; and when a year afterwards you have come again to the same doorway, inquiring, Where are we now ? and have measured your height, you have been surprised and delighted to find that your second mark was an inch or so higher than the first. You have perhaps been on a voyage, and day by day you have watched the captain with his instruments taking observations ; and when the latitude and longitude have been told you, you have eagerly taken the chart to prick off the day's reckoning, and the question uppermost in your thoughts and the thoughts of your fellow-passengers has been, Where are we now ?

There are special times in our history when it is well for us to pause and ask ourselves this question, and the opening of the year or a birthday present fitting opportunities.

If we are only where we were twelve months since, we have not done well ; if we have been going back, we have

done worse ; but if we can feel that we are better, happier, wiser, nobler, and more prosperous than we were, we have a just cause for satisfaction and joy.

As regards our progress at school, where are we now? Surely not drudging over the same lessons, nor seated on the same form. Last year some of us said,—

“Rule of three doth puzzle me,
And Practice drives me mad;”

and now we look upon those rules as vanquished foes, no longer a terror to us. A year ago, a skeleton map haunted our thoughts like a hobgoblin ; now we can fill up its countries, and mountains, and rivers, and flatter ourselves we know a good deal more of geography than Christopher Columbus did with all his travelling. Last year we sighed and groaned over our dog-eared grammars, announced nouns to be “bores,” prepositions preposterous, declined verbs altogether, were dejected over adjectives, and thought parsing “passing strange.” Now we can dissect a sentence, and are as familiar with the parts of speech as we are with the parts which form our puzzles.

Well this is satisfactory ; and if we can say, “I am improved ; I’ve used the old year well, and am higher in my class, and more proficient in my studies,” we have a right to feel satisfied. But if we have shirked our studies, “cribbed,” dawdled, and felt school a nuisance ; if we have made excuses for not preparing our lessons over-night, and have cowardly slunk away from all the hard bits ; and if we feel

that we are not much more clever than we were,—well, then we deserve to be scouted and called “Dunce, dunce, D D’s,” and a great many disagreeable things besides.

As regards our progress in business, where are we now? And here let me say we have not all the same opportunities of getting on and pushing our way in business life as we have in school life; and in some cases it may be from no fault of our own if we are not in better positions now than we were a year ago: however, these cases are the exceptions and not the rule; so I shall talk about the rule.

If we can look back and feel that we have tried to give our employers satisfaction, have tried to gain a knowledge of the business so as to qualify us for promotion, and have made ourselves useful, so that our services would be missed; if we have always tried to be respectful and strictly honest, never tampering with small change as our “commission,” nor sneaking into office ten minutes after time; never idling when our employer has been away, and pretending to be terribly busy the moment he has returned; never appropriating postage stamps as perquisites, or leaving office half an hour before our time, because the “governor was out;” if we feel we have done our duty in that station in life in which it has pleased God to call us,—well, then we too have a right to feel satisfied; and if, for some reason we cannot understand, our employers do not raise our salaries or place us in higher positions, don’t let us be discouraged: we have done our duty; virtue is its own reward, and sooner or later it will be recognised and rewarded by others.

As regards our progress towards the gates of the Golden City, where are we now? It is, or ought to be, a bitter mortification for the school boy to think he is not further advanced in studies than he was a year ago ; it is a source of uneasiness to the youth in business if he is not nearer to a better clerkship than he was when he started ; but what a terrible distress it ought to be to any of us to think that the great goal of life, the real manliness and dignity for which we were created, the great destiny and end of being, is no nearer than it was !

But my friends, depend upon it we have none but ourselves to blame if the past year has been a failure with us ; and if we ask our hearts the question as to our position, and feel we are no nearer heaven, no nearer to the Saviour, no nearer to the measure of the stature of men in Christ Jesus ; if we feel that all the teachings of His providence, and the instructions of our Bible have made us no better, but rather the worse, **AT ONCE** let us hasten to Him who is slow to anger, and plenteous in goodness and mercy, and in His strength resolve to turn over a new leaf, and determine that if we are spared to see the close of another year, it shall have been, in every sense of the word, a happy one.





Tests of Character.

"It is not the cowl that makes the monk."

AN eccentric old friend of mine, who has some of the funniest notions I ever heard, said to me one day, "Some people say they can tell you a man's character at first sight, Mr. Merry; but I have two methods which, to my mind, are first-rate tests of character; a man's walking-stick and a man's walk. Show me one or other, and I'll guarantee I shan't be very wide of the mark in my estimate of the man."

I am never so happy as when I can upset my old friend's crotchets, so I said "Agreed;" and went out in search of walking-sticks. I brought three to him. One was a thin, delicate, little bamboo stick, with a fantastic handle, and some twisted cord with tassels at the top, and a bright brass ferrule at the bottom. The next was a very plain stick, without any ornaments, and only a smooth bone handle; its intrinsic value was probably ninepence. The third was a great, heavy, primitive stick, with a knotty knob for a handle, which would have made a garotter's blood run cold to see flourished at him.

My worthy old friend took them up carefully, looked at them very knowingly, pretended to be in profound thought, and then sententiously began—

“No. 1 belongs to a fast man ; a young spark, with more ornaments of body than mind ; with more scents than sense ; thinks more of himself than others think of him—a butterfly. Bah !

“No. 2 belongs to a shrewd business man, a man of independent character, who is above appearance.

“No. 3 belongs to a stern, stout, plodding man—a soldier in heart ; a man with a strong will and a stronger temper, who looks upon the world more as a battle-field than a paradise. Now, Mr. Merry, am I right ?”

I had been struggling to look grave, and now I burst out with my pent up Ha ! ha ! and my old sides shook.

“No. 1,” said I, “belongs to me. Look at my bald pate and wrinkled brow, and behold the young spark ! No. 2 belongs to my harem-scarem nephew, who bought it to play hockey with, last Christmas, and would as much like to be seen walking along the street with that as he would arm-in-arm with a crossing sweeper. And No. 3 belongs to my good friend Deacon Hobson ; the quietest, mildest, most amiable man under the sun. So you see your tests of character, old fellow, are a failure.”

I asked him how he could tell character by a man's walk, and he explained by thé passers by.

“There,” said he, “see that man with his hands in his pockets, sauntering along, gazing about him. I should

say, weak and irresolute is he ; the purpose of to-day is rent away to-morrow. A man to talk of attempts, but never attempting—never doing.

But that quick, light-stepped man, with the clenched hand, is a man of mind and purpose, whose way in the world is right ahead, and whose watchword in difficulties is ‘Up, and at ‘em !’”

And so my old friend rattled on ; but of course I did not agree with him, and I don’t suppose you will, either.

Now let me tell you of a better recipe for testing a character. It is not by handwriting, nor by walking-sticks, nor by walk. It is not by the colour of the hair, or the expression of countenance, which is not always an index of the mind ; no, these are all flimsy crotchets, and we want something more real and solid. See a man or a youth in difficulties, surrounded by temptation, in the midst of danger, and watch him ; then you see whether he has a character. You can see it in his fortitude, his forbearance, his sinless anger, his generous zeal ; and if these are based upon good sound principles, then you see God’s noblest work—an honest man.

I picture to myself a youth, with a fresh, ruddy face, a sparkling eye, a merry smile. He is just making a start in life ; all the lessons of childhood, the blessings of home care, the influence of early companionship, which have been moulding his character, are now to be put to the trial. The office at which he works is full of clerks, and after a few days he becomes acquainted with them. The

test soon comes ; will he maintain the old-fashioned principles, taught him by good parents and zealous teachers? Will he hold himself aloof from that which his conscience must condemn, and will he bring upon himself the ridicule of his companions, and perhaps their enmity ; or will he boldly face wrong in the firm confidence of right ?

I picture him conversing with one of the clerks, and hearing the unholy words of blasphemy, or the coarse vulgarity of profane language ; or I picture him hearing the licentious joke, and while his companions are convulsed with laughter, standing aside with a flushed face and an angry frown. "You old Methodist, why don't you laugh?" they say. "I cannot laugh at that which I condemn, and I do condemn that style of conversation as gross in its immorality and offensive to God." Does he heed the laugh and the sneer? No! he feels strong in the answer of a good conscience, and his companions, despite their laughter and their sneers, feel that the "old Methodist" has a character superior to their own.

I picture to myself a lad, a member of a Bible-class, with his Bible under his arm ; he is walking towards the school. He walks slowly, for the day is warm, and he is full early for the class. He stops at the cry of Halloo! and in a moment some friends are at his side.

"Join us in a stroll this afternoon," says one ; "it is just the day for enjoying the beauties of nature. We are going to have a quiet afternoon ; and if the green fields and bright sunlight, and the birds and flowers, are not

more instructive than a prosy teacher in a close room, I'm a Dutchman!" .

"No, I cannot join you! I should feel bound to account for my absence from the class, and I know my explanation would be painful to my good friend, the teacher; and I'm sure my example would be injurious. Besides, if I do that which I condemn, how can I consistently condemn it? I have said a dozen times that I believe it is not right to spend this day in pleasure-seeking, even though the pleasure consists in admiring God's works in nature."

"But, man, if you are so good as all that, it cannot do you harm."

"Yes it would; and out of respect for my own character, to say the least, I cannot go."

Now, my friends, will you let me give you a bit of wholesome advice and counsel?

There are three things which are essential elements in a manly character—courage, candour, and truth.

I don't mean brute courage, for murderers and house-breakers are often courageous men; and I don't mean foolhardy courage, leave that to Blondin and the like. No; moral courage is courage of the highest kind. It is nobler to say "I will," in a right cause, in the everyday battle of life, than to bear the standard in the blood-stained field; nobler to say "No," and stick to it, than to do some daring deed which will make the ears of the world tingle; nobler to bear the sneers of false-hearted friends, than to earn the applause of a great multitude.

Candour is as essential as courage ; in fact, the two are twin brothers. Who does not like to hear the frank avowal of that which is good, the open-hearted, ingenuous protest against evil? It wants courage to maintain a principle ; it wants candour to enforce it. There is nothing which cements true friendship like candour ; it is a luxury to have a friend who will speak out to us and show us his heart, who does not envelope himself in reserve, and fence himself up as private property, where no trespassers are allowed. How much happier home would be if we only cultivated the habit of being candid to each other ! Little differences, small as grains of mustard seed, often grow to become the greatest hindrances to happiness and peace, when a candid word would wither the roots of bitterness, and save a world of trouble and vexation. How useful we might be to our companions if we would only be candid with them, willing to acknowledge ourselves in the wrong if our consciences tell us we are so, and ready to point out to them where they are wrong, so as to warn and help them in their difficulties !

Truth does not consist only in words. A man may be scrupulously truthful in all he says, and yet his whole life may be a lie. It is far easier to be truthful in words than in actions. How often we see people pretending to be very sorrowful for things about which they do not care two straws ; who will sympathize with you, and seem to enter so deeply into all your cares, and as soon as your back is turned, vote you a bore ! How often we see people pretending to take

a great interest in some cause, as if they were seeking only to serve that cause, when, in reality, their one motive is to serve themselves. How often we see people encouraging, by actions, things which by words they profess to dislike! It is well to have truthful lips; but the truth which shall pervade our whole lives, provoking us to courage, and developing itself in candour, must be "truth in the inward parts."

Perhaps some of you, my friends, have not great riches, nor great talents, nor great prospects brightening before you; but never mind, go forth into the world with good, manly characters, which can bear the test of trial and temptation, and you will have crowns of honour wreathed for you, which will last when the crowns of fame have all perished; and you will make for yourselves names which will be placed on the glorious list of God's heroes, to be remembered for ever.



On the Ice.

“ Keeping from falling is better than helping up.”



WELCOME the day when the boys rush about with the joyful intelligence “The ice bears!” and thrice welcome if that event takes place in the holidays. Never mind the “cauld blast,” skate and get warm; never mind the snow, sweep it away; fear nothing in the skating season but a thaw. Of all the healthy, exhilarating, joyous, jolly sports which gladden the winter season, skating carries the palm. Who does not love to skim over the glistening ice, dart among the crowd, spin at a giddy rate round the corners, turn about and wheel about, and off again anywhere with body and spirits elastic enough for anything? There is a wonderful charm in easy rapid motion. At some time or another we have all wished we were birds that we might cleave the air and skim about as the swallows do. In dreams we have sometimes fancied we really were flying, and the sensation has been very delightful, until at last we have experienced a difficulty in coming down just when we wanted, and have awakened to find ourselves clutching at the bedpost,

no farther advanced in our aerial voyage than when we started. We like express trains, when we whiz along at fifty miles an hour, and trees and houses all run away from us before we have time to look at them ; but the unsatisfactory part of it is that we sit still while the engine does the work. We like velocipedes, but we can't always go down-hill with them, and they are poor things to go ahead on level land. We like running, but we so soon get winded. We like riding and driving, but the horses do the work. Skating gives us all the combined pleasure of flying, riding, running, and driving, besides the intense satisfaction of being dependent upon ourselves for our fun.

It is a grand day in our town when the ice bears—all the world and his wife are off to the lake to take part in the sports, and I propose that we should go too.

Look ! there goes Dr. Birch with his boys, and the old gentleman is getting out of breath before the fun begins ; there are the students on the other side of the road, trying to look as if they didn't belong to the school ; there is the Squire and his party from the big house ; there goes Dick, Tom, and Harry, and there the butcher, the baker, the candlestick-maker, apothecary, ploughboy, and—a gentleman in a white hat.

The banks are crowded, and many adventurous people are on the lake. All is excitement—small boys are getting up a Joint Stock Company Slide, and those with the biggest hob-nails are the managing directors. Big boys who haven't got skates or hob-nail boots are bribing a sweeper to brush

away the snow and polish up a slide for them. Old men and maidens with list round their boots imagine they are doing perilous deeds by walking about on the ice. And there go the skaters ! look how they whirl and wheel about, now free as the morning breeze, now coming in contact with an amateur, and both measuring their lengths on the ice. And now everybody is watching a bonnie lassie, who skims over the lake as a fairy does over the leaves of the water-lily ; away she goes ! in and out, round about, and a young fellow who knows how to skate follows her like her shadow, and jealous youths say he is her brother, and some say that she is Diana Vernon.

Here are the men letting out skates, and a crowd is pressing round to see the adventurers start. What fun it is to watch that costly-looking young man with the eyeglass, who has been bullied by his lady friends to show them how he can skate. His teeth chatter as the man screws the skates on, and he smiles a sickly smile as he attempts some feeble jokes to keep his spirits up : " It's cold enough without my frieze coat," said he ; and when the lender of skates, who didn't see the joke, laughed very loudly, he tried again, and remarked, when the skates were on, " There's a *plaiice* for everything ;" and so he found, for the moment he stood upright, his legs ran from underneath him, and then ran up in the air, and he soon found his back where his feet ought to have been. " That's *an ice* fall," said he, but up again and down again, now nervously clutching at a bystander as he spun past, and now rushing at the rate of six miles an hour

on all-fours, until some generous fellow gave him a stick and led him off triumphantly.

A medley group—old and young, rich and poor, good skaters and bad, sweepers, drag-men, gingerbread-nut and peppermint venders—and every one enjoying his morning on the ice after his own fashion.

And these were my reflections.—All the world's an ice field, and all the men and women merely skaters: I am reminded of the slippery paths of youth,—the novice girding on his implements for a successful career, and starting off; his first false steps and his frequent downfalls, until at length he overcomes his difficulties, and then away he goes steadily, bravely on, and departing carves his name or leaves his skate-marks on the ice of Time.—I see an emblem of society, in which all men sooner or later find their level.—I notice that the downfall of one almost invariably effects the downfall of many, and attracts the attention of all.—I see there are tempters on the ice, men who persuade lads of lighter weight to go and try whether all's safe, and make cat's-paws of them.—I see holes in the ice, where some have sunk to rise no more.—And I see the aids to progress and the genius of philanthropy symbolised by the Royal Humane Society. But here I paused, for my reflections were suddenly stopped by a peculiar gingerbread-nut man, who offered me his goods with the puzzling query, "If one'll keep yer warm for a week, what'll a pound do?"



On Pluck.

*"He that's afraid of the wagging of feathers
must keep from among wild-fowl."*



OME people think that the word "pluck" is a vulgar word, and that half a dozen better substitutes might be found. Well, let them find them. I have a great regard for it, and think it holds a meaning; or, at all events, conveys a meaning to my mind, different and better than any of its similar terms. "Courage" may be moral, physical, or brutal; "manliness" may stand for high principle, strength of mind, or outward appearance. Fearlessness may mean foolhardiness, or indifference to consequences; but pluck means pluck, and nothing else. If I were to attempt to define it, I should say, "pluck is the fearless, manly *impulse of courage*," and if any of you disagree with the definition, and will send me a better, it shall be "inserted in our next."

We speak sometimes of pluck in an animal, but for that our definition hardly holds good.

A horse was coming down hill, and not picking his way with the caution that was necessary; and down he

fell, with all his legs under him, and the shafts hemming him in. The carter got down in a great stew, and bustled about to try and get him up; but the horse quietly took wind where he was, resisted all interference with a swing of the head, and then, as soon as the carter's back was turned, gathered up his legs with almost supernatural strength, and without any assistance put the whole affair right. It was pluck that did it.

A cock and hen had been fighting, and the hen got the worst of it. Her neck was torn, and it was evident she would soon die. A farm labourer coming along with a hatchet in his hand stopped the fight, and putting the hen's head on a block, decapitated her with a blow, and went on his way. The cock, who had been driven off, returned immediately to the fight; and when he saw his opponent minus her head, he jumped on the dead body, and flapping his ruffled wings, gave a loud triumphant cock-a-doodle-doo! That was decidedly pluck.

I don't like fighting, and never did; but this story puts me in mind of another. When I was a boy, I was going one day with a schoolfellow to a party, and we were dressed out in our very best clothes. The fashion for boys then was to wear frills to their shirts, and I had on a very fine one indeed, of which probably I was not a little proud. On the road to the party we met a sweep, a great ugly fellow, as big again as either of us, and with a soot bag on his shoulder as big as both of us put together. We were only little boys, but I was

the elder, and about twelve years old. The sweep made up to my companion, and said some low, disagreeable, and personal things to him, as sweeps can if they are so disposed. My companion was very disconcerted, and tried to pass without taking any notice; but the sweep persisted in interfering with him. Some boys came up and joined in the chaff. One lad, by a terrible fatality, was carrying a red herring in his hand, and the sweep, from very wantonness, took it out of his hand, and threw it in my poor friend Charlie's face, who burst into tears. My blood was up, I knew it was no use talking, for the sweep could beat me at that; but I threw off my jacket and cap and squared up at him, with my fine frill shirt glistening in the sun, and my hair, which had only been under the curling tongs half an hour before, waving in the breeze, and, as boys would say, I let fly at the sweep. Down came his soot bag on my head and back, and up went my fists into his sooty face. Now blow for blow, now struggle for struggle, till it was hard to say who was the blackest: now there were cheers for the little 'un and groans for the blackamoor, till at last a good blow straight from the shoulder sent the sweep on his back, and he declared he had had enough.

Let me say again, I don't like fighting, and never did, and I was heartily ashamed of the whole affair; but I pride myself up to this day that if it wasn't good taste, it was decidedly good pluck.

A chemist one day had a large can of gunpowder brought to

his shop, and as it was more than he would be allowed to keep on his premises if the fact were known, he had it very carefully taken down into the cellar, where he opened it, intending to divide it into parts, and distribute it in different places. But when he had just got the lid off he was called away, and left it as it was. As ill luck would have it, he forgot to lock the cellar-door, and when at last it flashed across his mind, he saw his assistant coming up the stairs with some drugs in his hand. "Did you take a candle with you, William?" he said, as quietly as he could. "Yes, sir," said William. "Where did you put it?" said the chemist. "I hadn't got a candlestick, sir, so I stuck it into a can of seed; and I've left it there, because I could not carry it up with these things in my hand!" "All right, I'll fetch it!" And with a steady, resolute step, he went down to the cellar and carefully drew out the lighted candle from the can of gunpowder!

Pluck is a thing that everybody admires; it is an original gift, and not to be imitated, although the courage from which it springs may be cultivated. It does not consist of words; talking the language of pluck for a lifetime will not make a man plucky. I have often heard boys say, "I had more than half a mind to have done so-and-so,"—some wonderful instance of pluck, if it had been carried into effect; but, as the result showed, a mere wordy nothing.

I think that the man or boy who is able at a crisis to show great presence of mind and great pluck, is a far nobler being than he who stands shivering in his shoes and not knowing what to do. He shows that he has not only physical courage,

but well-disciplined mental power, promptitude of thought and action. And this is a power, which, if rightly used, is one of the most influential we can possess. The influence of mere physical pluck, to see any one, regardless of consequences, ready and able to defend himself, or vindicate the cause of another, is good ; but thrice blessed is the pluck which will boldly confront foes in the defence of principle, or boldly vindicate the best and most sacred cause. The boy who said to a party of men who were afraid to go over a mountain pass, "I'll take you over!" and, seizing his alpen-stock, led them on by the sheer power of his pluck, had just the mental qualifications to be a leader of others through the dark places in the way of life. And that school-boy who saw his tutor the other day struggling in the water and nearly drowned, and plunged in after him and dragged him to the shore by the hair of his head, was just the sort of boy, if he rightly used the power within him, to rescue from a more fatal sea those who are ready to perish.

Are you plucky boys and girls? Modesty prevents your answering, but I hope, and I have no reason to doubt, that you are. Well, it is wise and right and noble to exercise your pluck when and where you can ; everybody admires the one who can do "everybody's dags," but do not forget that the physical power you possess, and the mental training you have gone through, bring with them responsibilities. More is expected of you than of those who are naturally weak and timid and hesitating. You ought to be able to speak the truth, fight for the truth, die for the truth, if need be ; you ought to be

strong to defend the right, assert the right, and live the right. Life is an earnest and a dangerous thing ; to conquer its difficulties and overcome its evils requires all the pluck we have, and happy he who in a real and literal way has strengthened himself to climb the hills, swim against the stream, fight against the foe, and run the race, of the great highway of being.





On Stilts.

“Hasty climbers have sudden falls.”



As a war-horse scents the battle from afar, so does a boy or girl the inevitable tum-tum of the drum and the shrill strains of the pan-pipes which announce

that Punch and Judy is in the street. Those welcome sounds reached my ears one morning, and looking out of the window expecting to see that wonderful Jack-in-the-box kind of house in which farce and tragedy, fun and murder, are committed with such pertinacity, I was disappointed. No merry Mr. Punch was there, no good-natured Judy showed fight to her loving spouse, no sober dog Toby gazed down upon the scene of slaughter, but, instead, lo and behold, a girl in a white dress, all covered over with costly tinsel, was walking above the heads of the people, kissing her hand to the inhabitants of the first-floor windows, and making herself a grotto, after the manner of fairy queens, among the branches of the trees which grew beside the road. The young lady was on stilts, and towering above the vulgar crowd, amid the applause of the little ragamuffins, who regarded her as a visitor from another world, too bright and beautiful to touch the common earth, this lassie-long-legs performed her wonderful dances, and gained in return the halfpennies and pennies of the passers-by.

Now, amusement is as contagious as fun, and fashion in fun is as changeable as fashion in dress. That very afternoon, hearing a tremendous shouting and rejoicing among the boys in the back garden, I went and looked out at the window, and there, to my great surprise, I beheld Master Tom and Master Willie mounted on stilts, and old Leo entering into the full spirit of the fun, walking by their side with solemn measured step, as though he had been trained to it all his life.

Of course I was requested to come out and have a try at walking on stilts. Willie informed me that it was "quite the

cheese to be stilt-on," and I was earnestly assured by Tom that it was so jolly, I must of necessity enjoy it. But as I happened to recollect at that moment Bunyan's lines beginning—

"He that is down need fear no fall,"

I determined to be content with the legs I had instead of trusting to others I knew not of; and in this case I felt, as the copy-slip says, that "Contentment is great gain."

Boys only look at sports in the light of sport; old boys who have gone past the age for indulging in them, but whose hearts are light and whose legs are not lissom, like to moralise; and so, as I sat at my window and watched those gawky forms, I found "sermons in stilts."

It is a natural and a right thing for everybody to wish to get up in the world, and to have a high standing; and to accomplish this there are means natural and means artificial. There are moral Anaks and Changs who tower above the rest of the world, and there are men whose heads are as high, and who *seem* to be above their fellows, but they stand on a very different footing, for they are men on stilts. In other words, there are those who attain to great heights in the natural order of moral growth, and there are those who adopt false and unsafe expedients, and the higher they rise the more sure and the more fatal is their fall. They think it a slight and an easy thing to add to their stature one cubit, and forget that the process of attaining position in the world is by careful and steady perseverance, and by the use of those exercises which develop moral strength, as the sports of boyhood develop physical strength.

III

With a very little capital a man took a very large business ; he had clerks and warehousemen ; he bought largely on credit ; he adorned the walls of towns and cities with flaming advertisements ; he lived in a beautiful suburban villa ; he sat on committees and boards, and on chairs at public meetings. He occupied a high position, but he was a man on stilts ! One day his name was in the paper under the heading of Bankruptcy, the windows of his shop were whitewashed, the clerks and warehousemen were scattered to fresh places, the suburban villa was sold up. The stilts had given way, and the man had found his level. He forgot that great men must attain their greatness inch by inch, not foot by foot ; he forgot that the journey of life is step by step, not a hop, a skip, and a jump. He held up his head too high by means of the stilts, and when they were knocked away from under him, he had not a leg to stand upon that could keep his head even on a level with the pigmies around, who, never having attempted the higher walks of life, did not feel the "come down" which distressed and mortified him.

Ernest Barry created a sensation at school. He skulked his lessons, he cribbed most disreputably from everybody who had anything worth cribbing ; he got a good name in the playground, but a bad name in the class, and he lived upon the rule which unprincipled lads often adopt, "Do as little work as you can, scamp your lessons, and indulge in play as much as you can, and never do to-day what you can put off till to-morrow." But the examination was coming on, and Ernest Barry set himself to work to condense the studies of a year into

a month. He coached, he crammed, and he cribbed, and the sensation he created in the school was this : he came out first in the examination, greatly to the surprise of everybody, and especially himself ! Some boys applauded him, some envied, and some said, " What's the use of plodding on, always grinding away at our work, when Barry can saunter through the year and come in first by just putting a spurt on at the last." Ay, but they did not consider that Ernest Barry was a boy on stilts. Mr. Barry, senior, was so delighted with his son's success, that he took him away from the school, and started him in one of the learned professions ; but soon, alas ! he had to regret the step he had taken. Ernest was a mere dolt, in those necessary and solid branches of education in which he was supposed to be a thorough scholar. The crams for his examination having been speedily obtained were speedily forgotten. The stilts were knocked from under him, and he had to go back to school, to grow by steady degrees to that position which he had falsely gained.

So boys, walk on stilts in your gardens as much as you like, and get as much fun out of the sport as you can ; but in the battle and journey of life try to attain the fulness of the stature of men, cultivate the growth of all that is true, manly, pure, and honest, and never put your trust in stilts.





On Simpletons.

"Fools make feasts, and wise men eat them."

THERE is a vast difference between being simple and being a simpleton. That boy who buried a seed, and watched it till it came to a full-grown plant, bearing many flowers and many seeds, certainly performed a very simple trick when he buried a sixpence, and watched anxiously, expecting it would come up half a crown; but he was no simpleton. That lad who went out to bathe, and, finding the stream was too deep, rested quietly on the bank until some of it should run out, was shrewd enough to know that discretion is the greater part of valour.

Farmer Haytum's man Joe was a splendid fellow for work; he could stack a rick, plough an even furrow, drive a team, or smack a whip, with any man in the county. He had got money in the savings bank, and there was a neat little lassie who never cared to put on her best bonnet with the blue streamers unless Joe was at hand to admire them. He was never idle, never extravagant; and, as he used to say, "he'd work honestly for his bread, even if he got his cheese given

to him." Joe came up to "Lunnon" once, to see the "mighty foine sights" of what he was pleased to call the great "metropolus;" and though we know, from his previous history, he was "nae daft," as the Scotch say, his London experiences proved that he was decidedly simple. For instance, when the conductor of a "bus called out some unearthly sounds, and beckoned to Joe, after the manner of conductors, he never dreamt what he was called for, but ran up briskly and asked, "What are yer pleased to want?" and, of course, the man slammed the door, blew his whistle, and left Joe rubbing his woolly head, wondering whatever the "gentleman" should have taken the trouble to call him for if he wasn't wanted. But with all his simplicity Joe was not a simpleton.

We are apt to think of that youth who cut open the bellows to see where the wind came from as a simpleton. Nothing of the kind! He went about the pursuit of knowledge in a simple way, but it was the way he considered best, and he worked out his aërial idea with considerable gusto. Many a wise man has been taken for a simpleton. Roger Bacon in his study, Columbus in his ramshackle ships, star-gazers, rock-breakers, electricians, explorers, miners, all have had their first steps to knowledge laughed at; but they—like the boy with the bellows, for aught we know to the contrary—have proved themselves to be no simpletons.

But these are illustrations of what I do not mean. Nor do I mean by simpletons those poor half-witted beings who are so tenderly called by some "God's creatures," and "the town's children."

Here is a rough definition. To be simple is to be unsophisticated, or inexperienced, or easily understood. The great Isaac Newton was a simple man, and so was John Milton; the grandest of all books—the Bible—is remarkable for its simplicity. To be a simpleton is to be silly, soft, woefully brain-cramped,—to have a child's head on a man's shoulders.

There was a man who had plenty of money, and plenty of opportunities for doing a world of good; but, strange as it may appear, he was quite ignorant of the value of money. I do not mean that he had not learnt his pence and shilling tables, or that he was ignorant of the fact that twenty shillings make a pound: that he knew, but he did not know what a pound was worth when he possessed it. His favourite amusement was to stand on the brink of a river, and play at duck-and-drake with his money. "That man was a simpleton," say you. He was; and, though you may think the case an extreme one, I venture to say there are thousands who are like him. I know some well-educated youths who are equally ignorant of the value of money, and I will tell you how they display it. They ride to the City by omnibus, when, if they were to get up half an hour earlier, they might walk, and thus improve their health and save their money. They invest cash in noxious weeds, and then set light to them to see how much smoke they will produce. They pay for the privilege of sitting during the evening stived up in warm, close rooms, and being amused; when they might, with a thousand times more profit to themselves in every

sense, be amused in their own comfortable homes. They expend two pounds in adorning their persons, when one pound would be amply sufficient. "It's good for trade!" Yes, that may be; but it's bad for character. I grant you that a miser is as great a simpleton as a spendthrift, or even greater; and you will grant me that he who keeps the medium course is the wise man. Well, those youths figuratively play at duck-and-drake with their money, and your verdict has already been given,—“They are simpletons!”

We all have pleasant recollections of childish games, and none of us forget the pipe and basin of soap-and-water with which we used to play at blowing bubbles. Now, I knew a man who spent all his life in blowing bubbles, and such a passion had he for the game that, not content with playing at it all day, it haunted his dreams at night; and, when he was old, and had one foot in the grave, and his friends told him it was time to leave off that sort of thing, he still persisted, and his last bubble was rising just as he went down to the tomb.

“What a simpleton!” Yes, no doubt about it; and yet he was not the only one of his class. There are those who addict themselves to pleasure, and whose thoughts, night and day, are how they may kill time in enjoyment. There are those who are hatching wild-goose schemes, and hunting after golden eggs. There are those who seek fame or notoriety, and devise a thousand schemes for distinguishing themselves,—“mute, inglorious Miltons,” every-day philosophers, village Hampdens,—but each bubble bursts after it

has shown its pretty colour, and pleased for a few short minutes. Don't run away with the impression that everybody who seeks fame or notoriety is a simpleton, or you would prove yourself to be one.

If you have got a talent for anything, stick to it; don't hide that light under a bushel, but set it in a candlestick, feed the flame, and let it burn brightly, giving light all around. But be sure your flame is something worth having. There are ten thousand people in London about whom the world has never heard, who are ten thousand times more worthy of appreciation than—say Blondin, for example. But who would covet such notoriety? Misguided man! No one save a simpleton could have put such an interpretation upon the motto, "The soul of man was made to walk the skies," as he has done. The simple history of Humpty Dumpty teaches a very good lesson to people who have such lofty aspirations. Alas! how many pursuits in life there are which are mere bubbles! how many who have spent their lives in toying with them have gone out of the world exclaiming, "What a simpleton I have been!"

But there is a class of simpletons worse than any that I have mentioned. Imagine a man whose house is being destroyed with fire, warming himself by the burning rafters, jovially laughing "Ha! ha!" when he might be saving his goods. Imagine another leaning over the side of his boat to pick water-lilies when the roaring cataract is twenty yards ahead of him. Imagine another throwing his cap after butterflies at the very edge of a precipice. "Sim-

pletons!" Ah! true enough; but how many on the verge of destruction, close by the abyss of eternity, are sporting the time away, or tranquilly saying, "Peace, peace!" My friend, be not a simpleton of this class, but show your wisdom by seeking Him who can make you "wise unto salvation."





About Hobgoblins.

“A quiet conscience sleeps in thunder.”

YOU don't believe a bit about hobgoblins, eh? Well, then, I beg leave to disagree with you. I believe there are as many hobgoblins now-a-days as ever there were. We all know there are plenty of ghosts; we know that night is often made hideous in consequence with a flow of spirits; and there are no end of little imps—the concentrated essence of impudence—to be seen everywhere. I will not go so far as to say that the hobgoblins of 1868 are exactly like those of ancient fable. Fashion changes, you know; and battered helmets, long white robes, knights in armour, and the hoarse, sepulchral fe-fi-fo-fum style of ghostly conversation has gone out of date. I do not profess to know why hobgoblins come, but I suppose it is to pick up a few ideas, if nothing else, and learn to keep pace with the spirit of the times. But of course they are now obliged to be very cautious, for they are mortally frightened of being caught and Peppered for their intrusion.

When I was a boy I saw two awful apparitions in one night, and even now my blood runs all over my body when I think about it.

I had been to a birthday party, some three or four miles from home. Capital fun we had ; and when night came on, the amusement concluded with a grand display of fireworks. But when I found that none of the boys were going my way, and that I had a long, dismal, country walk to undertake at that time of night, all alone, I declare I trembled in my shoes. Of course I laughed very much and very loud when the boys chaffed me, and said it was only the cold that made my teeth chatter, and off I started.

In ten minutes I came to four cross roads, and I remembered how the boys used to say that murderers and suicides were buried there, "with a stake in their insides ;" so I hurried past as fast as my legs would carry me. But I hadn't got far when I saw in the distance a gigantic figure, with a huge head and long arms and one leg ! Could it be Spring-heel Jack ? or was it the ghost of the Giant that Jack slew ? For the moment I forgot whether that giant broke his leg when he fell from the bean-stalk, but I concluded he did. I stood still in great terror ; to go past I could not, to go back would be again to visit the cross-roads, and get laughed at for my pains. The great figure moved its tremendous arms, and seemed to beckon me. I dared not run away. Though it had but one leg it was a monstrous big one, a regular three-leaguer, and I should soon have been made prisoner. But while I paused, a dreadful voice broke the silence of the night. My heart seemed to be playing at rounders or leap-frog with itself, for it jumped within me. And that voice rang loud, and shrill, and deep, by turns. But oh, what a relief it was to recognise in it a dear,

familiar voice. It was not the call of the giant, but the he-haw of a poor old Neddy on the common.

“What a couple of asses we are!” I said to myself. “Come, Merry, my boy, where’s your pluck?” And feeling rather ashamed of my cowardice, I walked along nearer to the hobgoblin. All my fears were dissipated when I found it was only the stump of a tree, with two big branches and a knob in the centre, which really did look very much like a man’s head.

But my troubles were not all over. Half a mile farther on was a little village churchyard. I dreaded to go past it; but there were fortunately some houses close by, and I thought if anything happened I could scream for help. What was my horror when, approaching the churchyard, I saw a tall, white figure standing there. My tongue clave to the roof of my mouth, and my hair all turned into bristles. No mistake about it; there it was: a white figure wildly waving its arms, and swaying to and fro, as if in unutterable grief. I could not scream, but felt as people feel in nightmare. A gust of wind blew, and swept the dead leaves in a stream around me, and at that moment the figure in the churchyard fell on to the grave over which it had been standing, and seemed to clasp it in its arms. What I should have done I can’t decide; but happily for me, a cottage-door close by the churchyard was opened, and I heard a shrill female voice say—

“Jenny, you good-for-nothing gal, you never took that shirt off the line, and the wind has bin and blowed it down on the ground.”

Lighter of heart, I rushed along, and got home at last, looking very white, but very thankful I had not been carried off by giants or spirits, and too much ashamed to say a word about the tree or the shirt. Well, these were two hobgoblins ; at least they were hobgoblins to me ; and I need hardly tell you that all kindred spirits are invariably spirits of our own making.

Now, just in the same way in which very young people frighten themselves about that sort of hobgoblins, so we, when we get to riper years, frighten ourselves about other sorts, but equally unreal. "There is a lion in the way ; a lion is in the streets," we say. And often when we know our path of duty lies straight before, past the very den of the supposed lion, we are apt to turn aside, abandon ourselves to fear, and give up our purpose. I will only mention one of these instances, and you may multiply illustrations. The fear of ridicule is a terrible hobgoblin. How many a lad, whose heart has told him that to be honest with himself and those around him he must boldly take his own way, and brave dangers and difficulties, has seen in the distance the rolling eyes, and open mouth, and grinning features of the fiend Ridicule. And he has paused, trembled, turned aside. I admit that to face this hobgoblin much strength and courage is required. Peter, that ardent, fearless, noble man, who could venture to walk upon the waves, who could venture to break the silence at that great supernatural scene on the mount, who could venture to draw his sword and strike a servant of the high-priest's, even though a "great multitude with swords and staves" were there to

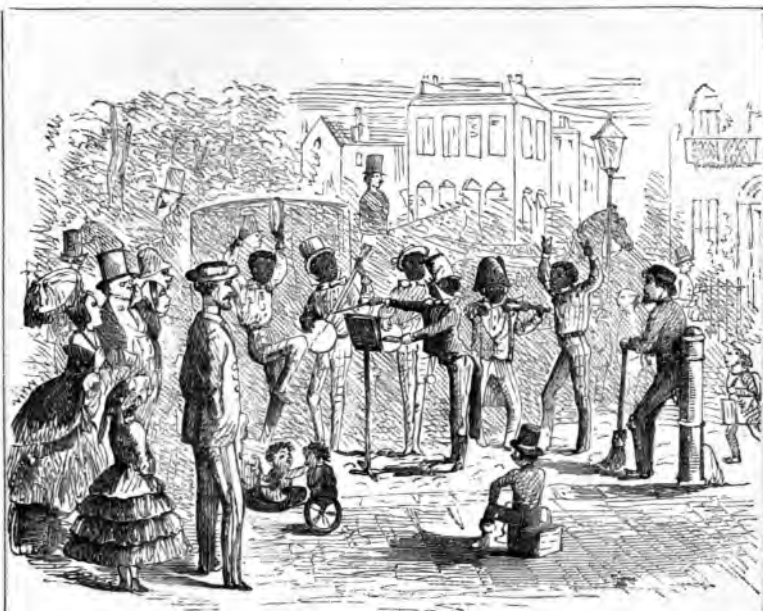
avenge the blow,—even he lost strength and courage when a damsel turned to him the shaft of ridicule, and said, “Thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.”

Lads, perhaps sometimes you cannot help natural fear. If you cannot, I am sorry for you ; for there is nothing more to be admired in human nature than noble fearlessness. But you can help moral fear, for there is One who has said, “Be ye strong and very courageous : fear not, neither be ye dismayed ; for I am with thee.” He may not think fit to give those physical capabilities which make the world’s heroes, but He will give you that best of all strength, strength to fight the battle of life, to face the enemies who look like friends, to travel along the dark pathways of being, to conquer all things, and be more than conqueror.

But there is one real hobgoblin, one evil spirit, who still haunts the world, and the name of his attendants is “Legion.” He is the great lion in the path. He wanders up and down in the world, plotting mischief, planning death. The old, childish fables used to terrify us when we were little children ; we had a dreadful hatred of old Bogie and all his satellites ; every chimney had, perhaps, some association of fear. I wish, as grown lads and lasses, we had a proportionate amount of fear as we read the records of this real hobgoblin. Every term descriptive of him is terrible : “The great dragon, that old serpent ;” “The power of darkness ;” “The wiles of the devil ;” “Fiery darts of the evil one.” And yet how little we fear him, and how much more prone we are to fear those evils which do not exist, or, if in existence, cannot be compared

with him who is prince of the power of evil ! Listen to the Great Teacher's voice : " Fear Him, which after He hath killed hath power to cast into hell ; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him."





Passers-by.

"There is a history in all men's lives."



STRANGE thoroughfare is ours, and strange sights and sounds are daily occurring which keep our little world alive. There is a wonderful interest in watching people, noting their peculiarities, guessing at the history of their lives, and feeling pretty sure that they will never know you, and that you will never know them. I wonder if it is really true that every footstep makes a lasting impression upon the world, and that every passer-by stirs

the atmosphere of every life he passes. I wonder if our mere presence in the world is an influence for good or evil, and whether our most mechanical actions are instruments of teaching right and wrong. These are hard problems, you say; well, let me tell you about our passers-by, and that may help to solve them. But find out all the morals for yourselves.

Eight o'clock strikes, and hardly has the last stroke sounded when a well-known voice cries, "Yuke O!" I ask myself, why does he not say what he means, and cry, "Milk O!"—simply because other milkmen cry "Yuke O!" and of course he must. And yet that man is from the country, for he says to Rebecca, the housekeeper, "It be a foin marning, this marning." Alas! that his rustic simplicity should have been contaminated; and yet I fear it must have been, or else why should he always stir the milk before ladling it out into the jug, unless he wished to *stir up the cream from the bottom!*

Half-past eight. The postman comes, and he knocks with his sharp rat-tat as only a postman can (I wonder if the Postmaster-General selects men who are charged with extraordinary electricity for postmen). Now, why should the milkman and the butcher and the baker always make a remark about the weather, but the postman never? This observation does not apply to one man only, but to all; they nod to the housekeeper and say, "Mr. Merry, one; Mr. Merry, two; O. Merry, Esq., three. That's all to-day," and, handing the three or four letters, as the case may be,

away they go. I take it that they are, as a class, out of conceit with the weather, and only in confidential moments refer to it, as a servant might to the peculiarities of her master. Postmen are very badly paid as a class. I wonder if they cherish a certain sort of spite against all receivers of letters. It may be only fancy, but it seems to me that our postmen always appear more cheerful when they add to their "Mr. Merry, one, Mr. Merry, two," the words, "tuppence to pay."

Quarter to nine. The newspaper boy; all newspaper boys are curiosities, but the boy that brings my paper is a cure-iosity, and so I always go to take the paper from him. Unsolicited he tells me the news, but always in the most grotesque and extravagant style. "Awful explosion this morning, sir, a bank busted! Head clerk ain't expected to live." The other morning he informed me, "More news about the Fenians, sir, all the harmy and navy called out, sir, as special constables!" But there was a stroke of genius in his report one morning when the news arrived of the submersion of Tortola. "Nothing much this morning, sir, 'xcept that Merrikey's swallered up by a hearthquake, and on'y the 'Tlantic Cable's left alive to tell the tale!" Where does the boy pick up all his queer notions? Not from books, not from the saying of others, but he has a natural talent for rough witticism, which seems to be more and more the birthright of the poor and uneducated. The other day, it was a densely-foggy morning, I said to him, when he announced more news of the rebellion, "What *is* to be

done with the Fenians?" "I'll give it up, sir; it's a riddle; but I think them Parliament chaps is like us, all in a fog!" My newspaper boy can't read, and yet he has surprised me with his information. "Where do you pick up the news," I asked him, "so that you can tell people what there is in the papers?" "8.30 'bus stops five minutes at the Gate," he replied; "and I always says, 'What's up?' to the conductor, as knows me, and he tells me the news in what he calls a 'pittomy' (epitome)."

Nine. A stream of clerks flowing to the City. Always the same faces every morning, wearing exactly the same expression. I wonder if they always think the same thoughts; most of them seem to be planning the day's work; one young man, who is invariably later than he ought to be, seems calculating whether he can possibly get into the office by the time the clock strikes ten, and this calculation occupies all his attention. But notice some of the "regulars." There goes that lanky boy who has outgrown his trousers, and who stoops more and more every day; I suppose it is because he is growing rapidly, and, just in proportion as he holds himself upright, his trousers become shorter. I'm sure it must be injurious for him to eat so many apples; perhaps that is why he always seems so terribly ashamed about it, and puts the apple in his pocket after every bite, and tries to look as if he had *not* got his mouth half full.

Here comes the "jaded youth." I can't make him out; he might be eighteen years old, or he might be twenty-eight. He shuffles up to town; never taking three consecutive

steps with his feet fairly off the ground. That shows indecision of character. He never clenches his hands, but lets them dangle, and the backs are always turned forwards. That shows weakness of intellect. I never saw him laugh but once, and that was on a slippery morning, when a cab-horse fell down, and the driver fell forward, and nearly broke his neck. That shows badness of disposition. My impression is that he has been thwarted, and that the business which takes him so regular to town is very irksome to him ; for when he returns at night—always late—he is comparatively cheerful, and one night in the summer I heard him whistle as he shuffled past.

There is Macbeth. I have thus named him because, in the first place, I imagine him to be a Scotchman ; and, secondly, because he always seems to be saying to some idea, "Come, let me clutch thee." He is evidently a great man at some elocution class or literary institution, and his delight is in recitation. As he walks, he rehearses ; and although he tries to keep his hands in his pockets, they will come out instinctively to "suit the action to the word." Sometimes he carries an umbrella, but it is a great temptation to him, for it becomes at one time the dagger which slew Cæsar, and at another the sceptre of King John. But never does it lead him into greater extravagance than on a windy, rainy day. Then he battles with the elements, and seems to be going through the paroxysms of King Lear—

"Blow winds and crack your cheeks ; rage, blow !
 You cataracts and hurricanes, spout
 Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks !
 Oh ! oh ! 'tis foul," etc.

What a contrast is he to that lawyer's clerk, who walks exactly at the same even pace, and never takes his eyes from the ground. No doubt he expects some day to stumble over the philosopher's stone, or something equally precious; but at present his discoveries seem to be confined to orange peel, which he carefully kicks off the pavement. Of course he never goes straight to town, because all veteran lawyer's clerks are crooked, one shoulder being higher than the other; the result of continued desk work. Of course, too, he has a hollow chest, and his chin comes a great deal too far forward. To the same cause "this indenture witnesseth." But what surprises me most about him is that his boots are always down at heel, and yet they can't be the same boots that he has worn for the last two or three years. It is a great pity he does not get them repaired, for he walks along as gingerly as a tight-rope dancer, always trying to balance himself on the side of the heel which has the most leather.

But look! look! The crisis of the morning has come. There is the governess, in her plain green silk dress, tripping along gaily, and trying not to see anybody or be seen. She is nervously playing a five-finger exercise on the side of her dress—and why? Because there is the divinity student on the other side of the way keeping up with her, and casting furtive glances from under the broad-brimmed felt hat, which is too large for him. Ha! and there, too, is the young German artist, with his portfolio under his arm, and his long, light hair thrown back, and his gold-rimmed spectacles set defiantly on his nose, jealously watching every glance, and cast-

ing sheep's eyes at the green silk dress, and wolf's eyes at the black felt hat. I don't know what the sequel to it all will be, but I think I can guess; for on that slippery morning in the winter when the governess fell, and the rivals rushed madly to the rescue, she gave her hand to the German artist, and allowed him to help her into a cab.

Oh! horror! It is Wednesday morning, and, as usual, the niggers have come. I wonder if those men will ever get low-spirited; they seem to be just as effervescent in the morning as at night, and never weary. Hark! the conductor is announcing the programme. "Bredren and massas, the first song will be an overturn from de 'Talian uproar, 'Hunky Doram;' de next piece of music will be a Yankee breakdown by Broder Bones; and den we shall sing de new oratorio, 'Johnny comes marching home.' Now, bredren, am you ready? Den one, two, tree, yah, yah, off we go!"

A world full of people, and every person a character, every life a history, every history a moral. It's a strange world, isn't it?





A Merry Christmas !



MERRY CHRISTMAS! Thousands of hearts are anticipating it, thousands of tongues are talking about it, thousands of happy, pleasant dreams are full of it; busy hands are preparing for it, patient hearts are waiting for it, boys and girls at school are almost crazy about it; oxen are fattening, hollyberries are reddening, mistletoe is blooming for it. And oh, the plans that are being formed for its celebration !

Bessie is coming home from school on Christmas-eve, and Robert has got three or four days' leave of absence from his situation, and they will come together by the train at night. Father will meet them at the station, and we will fill the windows with candles, and make the old logs blaze, and put up a big bunch of mistletoe in the hall to kiss them under, and a right merry welcome they shall have !

That is the arrangement in one family. Now hear what the old folks say :—

“ Jane, my dear, you must get the house in order. Only think ! you will have one, two, five, seven—yes, seven grandchildren all together, and two sons and two daughters; and the

place will be all astir with young, happy life, to remind us of bygone days. Mind, the pudding is the best you ever made, my dear, and let all the linen be well aired every day for a week before they come. What a bonny Christmas it will be !” And the old people laugh with delight at all the happiness before them.

Yes, there are loving hearts waiting for merry Christmas, and bright hopes are making the old ones young again, and the hearts of the young ones brimful with joy and gladness. From my heart I wish them all, young men and maidens, old men and children, a merry Christmas ! Thank God for its pleasant prospects and its pleasanter realities. Thank God for our happy homes, and our meeting together with our loved ones. Surely, if there is one day more than another when we should all join in one grand anthem of praise, from hearts overflowing with gratitude, it is the annual day of home-gathering, the central day of association, the red-letter day in family history —“merrie Christmas-tide.” Never does the merry laugh sound merrier, or the quiet smile of loving satisfaction have more sunshine in it ; never do the home-harmonies of the purring cat, the singing kettle, and the crackling logs, sound more musical ; never do the hearts of old and young, married and single, come nearer together ; never do the round games have more fun in them, nor jokes more spirit, than at merry Christmas-tide.

Well, that is one side of the question ; and now comes another. Home is God’s own illustration of heaven, and He wants the happiness and love of home to remain strong in our hearts for

ever ; so that when we have no longer a place on earth in the houses of our earthly fathers, we may all meet in our Father's house up yonder, where the home-gathering will never break up. And on this day of home-association, Christ came to our world to tell us of the better home, that is the heavenly, and to show us the Way. Let us not lose sight of this in the Christmas merry-making ; for thinking of Him does not make the heart sad, or the countenance downcast ; nay, it lights it up with a divine light, and gives a heavenly meaning to earthly joys. Think of Him, for Christmas is surely His day ; and if our hearts are glad because we mingle with our friends, should we exclude the Friend above all others ? And because we delight to meet our brethren, shall we forget our great Elder Brother ? And because we love our homes, shall we forget the Great Home where we all hope to assemble ? No ; shame upon such ingratitude ! Let us join in the song of the angels ; and as they in their praise first gave glory to God in the highest, so let the key-note of all our joy be thanksgiving to Him who has not only given us every good and perfect gift which makes life peaceful and beautiful, but the "unspeakable Gift."

Then there is another view we must take of Christmas. *All* have not the same happy prospects that we have. Let us go before Time, and take one or two peeps at Christmas scenes as they will be to some.

There is a poor widow-woman sitting in her room all alone. The handful of coals on the fire cling together to try and keep themselves alive. The candle throws but a poor light, as if it

were ashamed to reveal the desolate appearance of the room ; and the widow sits with her head resting on her hand, and sighs. Last year her husband sat with her, and merry were the moments when they joined in the glee of their little boy watching the Christmas candles. But to-night the snow is lying upon their graves, and a chill, colder than snow can give, is on the heart of that poor woman.

Change the scene. There is the chemist's shop, and a few shutters up give the appearance that the day is a holiday ; but the few shutters down tell the passers-by that there is somebody there to do any work that is needed. The chemist is enjoying the day with his friends, and brightly shines the fire in the parlour, and merrily go the hours. But look at that poor lad, minding shop. No wonder the tears are squeezing themselves out between his fingers, as he presses his hands up to his eyes. Poor boy ! He fancies he sees his father and mother sitting beside the fire, and little Nelly trying to read to them ; and he thinks he can see tears in their eyes as they regret that their dear boy Tom is not with them. And, oh, how he would love to be there, but it would cost him his situation if he were to rebel and go ; and would not that be a greater grief to his parents, who are very poor, and are so thankful for the few shillings he can send them from time to time ? And so he minds the shop, and hears the merry laughter, and the sounds of joy and comfort, and his heart is almost bursting.

Poor Tom ! Couldn't you go and say a kind word to him ? take him by the hand, and say, " Cheer up, Tom, old fellow,

there are good times in store for you?" Could you not manage to lend him a lively book to bricken him up a little, or get up a little subscription among yourselves, and take it to him, and say, "There, Tom, that will pay your railway fare to go home and see your friends on Saturday night, and then you can call Sunday Christmas-day: the Queen doesn't keep her birthday always on the same day, you know"? Why, Tom would brighten up, and be so thankful and glad, and you and he would spend a happier day in consequence.

And that poor widow I pictured to you. Don't you think some of your girls might go and say a kind word to her, and perhaps give her a kiss to remind her of her little boy who has gone to the bright world? Don't you think she would like a bit of Christmas pudding, and a nice log for her fire, which you might readily obtain for her from your parents? And don't you think God would be just as pleased to send you to minister to her, as He would one of the bright angels standing round the throne? Yes, that He would; and think what an honour it would be to be employed by God to do His business!

Now these are only just hints, but they may be useful; they *will* be, if you act on them; and I am quite certain that if you think of others, live for others, and try to spread abroad the sunshine that God has thrown round you, you will spend a happy and a merry Christmas.



Illustrated Catalogue
OF
BOOKS FOR THE YOUNG,

PUBLISHED BY

HODDER & STOUGHTON,



27, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.

Old Merry's Volumes.

"'Old Merry' has become one of our literary institutions, and we are always glad to give him cordial greeting, as a worthy successor to Old Humphrey, Peter Parley, and other caterers of intellectual amusement for the children of a past generation."—*Athenæum*.

Square 16mo, price 5s., choicest binding, gilt edges.

OLD MERRY'S ANNUAL FOR 1869.

Profusely Illustrated.

"'Old Merry' is one of the most genial, pleasant, and entertaining friends whom children can desire to find, and he has associated with himself in the production of '*Old Merry's Annual*,' a number of workers of like spirit with himself."—*Nonconformist*.

Square 16mo, price 1s., neatly bound.

OLD MERRY'S CHRISTMAS PARTY.

Stories Round the Fire, by R. M. BALLANTYNE, W. H. G. KINGSTON, EDWIN HODDER, Mrs. BICKERSTAFFE, SIDNEY DARYL, and others of the party. Illustrations.

"A cheery little book, full of joyous and sensible fun."—*Press*.

"'Old Merry' is an excellent storyteller. His '*Christmas Party*' is a seasonable book, and will be greatly relished."—*Public Opinion*.

In square 16mo, price 2s. 6d., cloth elegant.

FIRESIDE CHATS WITH THE YOUNGSTERS.

Second Edition, with a Portrait of Old Merry in Colours.

"'Old Merry' conveys very good advice in a very pretty book."—*Illustrated London News*.

"Our boys will laugh in heartiness, then think in quietness, over the pleasant, racy, wise talk of this genial friend."—*Nonconformist*.

"Pervaded by a spirit of cheerful kindness and smiling good sense. Very pleasant to all with hearts in their bosoms and brains in their heads, whether old or young."—*Daily News*.

"'Old Merry' again plays the part of moralist and jolly fellow to a ring of schoolboys who stand round him in the frontispiece, showing by their happy faces that the old man's jokes make ample amends, in their estimation for the keenness of the satire with which he lashes the follies of boyhood. 'Old Merry's' sketch of Mr. Braggadocia, jun., is capital."—*Athenæum*.

OLD MERRY'S NEW CHRISTMAS VOLUME.
In square 16mo, price 2s. 6d.
QUEER DISCOURSES ON QUEER PROVERBS.
By OLD MERRY. Handsomely bound in cloth.

SPECIMEN OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS.



"A CAT IN GLOVES CATCHES NO MICR."

In square 16mo, price 3s. 6d., cloth elegant,

STORIES FROM GERMANY.

1. Gold Seekers and Bread Winners. By FRANZ HOFFMANN.

2. The Cobbler, the Clerk, and the Lawyer of Liebstein. By GUSTAV NIERITZ.

Translated by ANNIE HARWOOD.

AN ILLUSTRATION IN "GOLD SEEKERS."



RIVERS OF GOLD.

NEW STORY BY SIDNEY DARYL. In square 16mo, price 3s. 6d., cloth elegant.

WITH THE TIDE ; or, a Life's Voyage.

By SIDNEY DARYL, author of "Told in the Twilight," etc.

SPECIMEN OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS.



"Janet rushed up to her father, and taking his hand in hers, and looking up into his face, said, I am no longer blind."

By Edwin Hodder.

Author of "Memories of New Zealand Life."

I.

Square 16mo, price 3s. 6d., cloth elegant.

LOST IN PARIS, AND OTHER STORIES.

With Illustrations.

CONTENTS.

LOST IN PARIS.
POOR MRS. VIC.
AN ADVENTURE IN THE DIGGINGS.
A DARK NIGHT AND A BRIGHT MORNING.
THE MYSTERIOUS KEY.
THE BIRD'S VISIT.
DANGER AND DELIVERANCE.

"LEFT HIS HOME."
THE FISHERMAN'S SON.
OUR PANORAMA.
HE WAS A BOY ONCE.
THE EVERY-DAY BOOK.
ONLY A DREAM.

II.

Third edition, fcap. 8vo, price 1s. 6d., neatly bound.

THE JUNIOR CLERK: A Tale of City Life.

With a Preface by W. EDWYN SHIPTON, Secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association.

"Every young man, on entering the counting-house, should have this tale put into his hand."—*City Press.*

"It is well told, the moral is obvious, and the religious principles are correct. It is just the book for presenting to a young man entering on city life."—*Record.*

"This is a most interesting, truthfully drawn, and profitable story."—*Nonconformist.*

"An excellent little book to place in the hands of young lads first entering into the world, and may possibly be the means of arresting them in the path of folly that leads through vice to crime."—*Spectator.*

III.

Square 16mo, price 3s. 6d., cloth elegant.

THE STORY OF JESUS IN VERSE.

With Ten full-page Illustrations.

"Bearing in mind that the author's clear and simple narratives are written for children, we find some ground for dissenting from his statement that his volume is worthless as a literary production."—*Athenæum.*

"The Scripture narrative is rendered into easy-flowing verse, with marvellous accuracy, and the moral is drawn in brief and striking lessons."—*Freeman.*

"A very pretty and interesting little book. The illustrative engravings are, alike in design and execution, much above the average, while the poetry is fluent, easy, and unaffected."—*Record.*

"The versification is not only simple and smooth, but is often felicitous; it cannot fail to be a great favourite with children. The getting up of the volume is elegant, and the illustrations are excellent. It is an admirable contribution to our nursery literature."—*British Quarterly Review.*

Second Edition, Fcap. 8vo, 3s. 6d., cloth elegant.

TOSSED ON THE WAVES. A Story of Young Life.

By EDWIN HODDER, author of "Memories of New Zealand Life," &c.

"Just the sort of story that boys delight to read."—*Athenaeum*.

"A fine, manly story. A book that would delight a boy's heart and do him good."—*Christian Work*

FRONTISPIECE TO "TOSSED ON THE WAVES."



"Their delight was to take occasional turns with him; and as their pleasure and his labour were the same, they became a sort of Fishmongers' Company."

A NOVEL CHRISTMAS PRESENT.***GEOGRAPHICAL FUN.*****TWELVE HUMOUROUS OUTLINES**

Of various countries, with Introduction and Descriptive Verses by
"ALEPH."

Printed in colours by Vincent Brooks, Day & Son.

In 4to, beautifully bound for presentation,

Price Five Shillings,

And elegantly bound in cloth, bevelled edges, price 7s. 6d.

By **Gen. W. Gurst, F.C.S.**

New and cheaper edition, foolscap 8vo, 1s. 6d., cloth.

THE YOUNG MAN SETTING OUT IN LIFE.

"There is in this prettily got up manual much valuable counsel. It is a book to awaken a sense of reverence in a young man's heart. . . . The spirit of the book is excellent, and the style is often eloquent."—*Athenaeum*.

"Deserves the highest commendation. Faithful, simple, graphic, and piquant throughout. We do not know a better book—we may almost say, none so good—for putting into the hands of a young man just entering into life."—*Christian Advocate and Review*.

By **the Wife of an Indian Officer.**

In 18mo, price 1s. 6d., neatly bound.

CHILDHOOD IN INDIA.

A Narrative for the Young. Founded on facts. Illustrations.

"The whole tone of the little tale is healthy. We think that little children in general will like it."—*Spectator*.

"This tale claims to be, as far as it goes, a correct picture of Anglo-Indian life and habits. It is nicely got up with appropriate illustrations."—*Reader*.

"A well-written narrative of the experience of a family who were in India during the terrible mutiny of 1857. It is a good story for children, who, if we mistake not, will be greatly pleased with the descriptions of Anglo-Indian life and manners given by the authoress and the wife of an officer in Her Majesty's service. The book is attractively got up."—*City Press*.

Second Edition, in square 16mo, price 2s. 6d., cloth elegant.

BUSY HANDS AND PATIENT HEARTS; or, the
Blind Boy of Dresden and his Friends. By GUSTAV NIERITZ,
Translated by ANNIE HARWOOD.

SPECIMEN OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS.



"MERRY CHRISTMAS."

By *Jane Taylor.*

Fcap. 8vo, 2s. 6d. cloth.

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF Q.Q.

Thirteenth edition.

"It is now half a century since the first of these essays appeared. In their collected form they have maintained a popularity which have seldom, if ever, been accorded to any similar collection of reprinted papers. Several of these pieces, such as 'The Discontented Pendulum,' 'How it Strikes a Stranger,' have taken a place among the classical compositions of the English language."—*Extract from the preface by the late Isaac Taylor.*

By *E. S. Jackson, M.A., F.G.S.*

Square 16mo, price 2s., cloth.

THE CABINET OF THE EARTH UNLOCKED.

Many Illustrations.

"The volume is daintily illustrated, and printed on toned paper."—*Athenæum.*

"A very clever descriptive account of geology, written within the comprehension of children. The subject is so treated as to combine amusement with instruction, and this union the author has preserved throughout. It would be considered a valued present for intelligent lads."—*Public Opinion.*

"Having cracked the earth's crust in his first chapter, Mr. Jackson cuts into his pie, and picks out for the benefit of his youthful readers the plums and currants, which he tells them are all called fossils in the language of geology. Pleasantly, in as simple language as it is possible to use, does he travel through the earth, describing its wonders as he proceeds, from the Dodo to the Megatherium."—*Daily News.*

By *Ingram Cobbin, M.A.*

Square 16mo, 7s. 6d., cloth, gilt edges.

THE CHILD'S COMMENTATOR ON THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. Twelve coloured Illustrations and many Woodcuts.

"A most captivating volume. Simple in style, evangelical in doctrine, exquisite in its illustrations, this commentary is likely to be a popular favourite."—*Evangelical Magazine.*

By *Ann and Jane Taylor.*

New and improved edition (the forty-seventh), 18mo, 1s. 6d.,
cloth elegant.

HYMNS FOR INFANT MINDS.

Frontispiece.

"The knowledge and love of Christ can nowhere be more readily gained by young children than from the Hymns of this most admirable woman (Ann Taylor)."—*Sermons by the late Dr. Arnold of Rugby.*

"A well-known little book, entitled 'Hymns for Infant Minds,' contains (Nos. 14 and 15) a better practical description of Christian humility, and its opposite, than I ever met with in so small a compass. Though very intelligible and touching to a mere child, a man of the most mature understanding, if not quite destitute of the virtue in question, may be the wiser and better for it."—*Whately's Essays on Christian Faith.*

In square 16mo, price 3s. 6d., cloth elegant,

TOLD IN THE TWILIGHT: Short Stories for Long Evenings.

By **SIDNEY DARYL.**

"Sidney Daryl has a capital style in addressing young people. He makes himself one amongst them, goes directly to the point, is cheerful and lively, and can fill up the hours of twilight with as homely and entertaining a story as any tale-teller we know."—*Daily News*.

SPECIMEN OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS.



"JOEY THE TUMBLER."

By **J. M. Ballantyne.**

Author of "The Life-boat," "Fighting the Flames."

In square 16mo, price 3s. 6d., cloth elegant.

SILVER LAKE; OR, LOST IN THE SNOW.

"In the little volume under consideration, we have the very element to charm the young and adventurous. Snow, Indian hunting, and border warfare, worked into a volume by the able hands of Ballantyne, can scarcely fail in its missions of entertainment."—*Queen.*

"A most graphic sketch of real life. The incidents are exciting, and give full scope for describing the varied hearts by which the pioneers of civilization in the far west contrive to support and enjoy life under apparently the most adverse circumstances."—*Daily Review.*

"Mr. Ballantyne is well known as one of the most brilliant and interesting story-tellers for young people of the day. We can cordially commend it as a most excellent gift-book at this season of the year. The children to whom it is given will not soon forget it."—*Weekly Review.*

By the Author of "Naomi."

In fcap. 8vo, price 5s., cloth elegant.

OLIVER WYNDHAM: A TALE OF THE GREAT PLAGUE. Frontispiece.

"It is an affecting and powerful story of the great plague."—*Morning Herald.*

"A touching and instructive story."—*Christian Advocate.*

"The story is well told, and is sure to become a favourite."—*Freeman.*

"The chief merit of the book is the exquisite delicacy with which it illustrates Christian feeling and Christian principle in circumstances the most trying and varied."—*Weekly Review.*

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

Square 16mo, cloth elegant, 3s. 6d. Illustrated.

BENAIAH: A TALE OF THE CAPTIVITY.

"An artistic and well-written tale that will amuse studious children, and help them to acquire a knowledge of Jewish history. The volume contains several illustrations; it is tastefully bound."—*Athenæum.*

"A very pretty story, very prettily told. The book is a most wholesome as well as interesting one, and is very handsomely illustrated and bound. The original history of the captivity is adhered to in its main facts, but incidents and characters have been engrafted upon it in an ingenious and successful manner."—*Illustrated Times.*

By **Fredrika Bremer.**

In square 16mo, 2s. 6d., cloth elegant.

THE BUTTERFLY'S GOSPEL, AND OTHER STORIES. Translated by MARGARET HOWITT. With Engravings.

"This is one of the most delightful books for children we have seen since Herr Andersen gave up telling his little poems to the small people."—*Athenæum.*

"These stories told with a witching simplicity that must catch the heart of a child."—*Court Journal.*

"The names of the author and the translator are sufficient guarantees for its excellence. The publishers, we may add, have done their utmost to make the binding correspond with the text."—*Westminster Review.*

Third Thousand. Square 16mo, 3s. 6d., cloth elegant,
*WASHED ASHORE; OR, THE TOWER OF STORM-
MOUNT BAY.* By W. H. G. KINGSTON, author of "Peter, the
Whaler," etc., etc.



"Two or three of them stretched out their hands to stop the horses, but when they saw the pistols levelled at their heads, most of them sprang hurriedly back again.

Old Merry's Magazine for Young People.

MERRY AND WISE.

Price Threepence Monthly, Illustrated.

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR 1889:—

Mr. W. H. G. KINGSTON, who wrote "Washed Ashore" a year or two ago, will contribute the leading tale, which is to be called "Adrift in a Boat," a story full of captivating adventures.

Mrs. PAYNE, the author of "Business and Pleasure," "Village Science," &c., will contribute a series of papers on "Pits and Furnaces; or, Life in the Black Country."

OLD MERRY proposes to tell a story every month.

N. R. will furnish us with a short article every month, under the heading of "Captain Cuttle's Note Book."

Papers from EDWIN HODDER, SIDNEY DARYL, E. J. S. CLIFFORD, Lieut. LOW, CYNTHA, M. J. C., R. HOPE MONCRIEFF, ANNIE HARWOOD, and other well-known writers, will occasionally appear, and several new friends will be introduced from time to time.

An important feature in the arrangements will be "Our Puzzle Department," upon which no pains will be spared. Prizes will be offered every month for the best answers, and, instead of being confined to books—Cricket Bats, Balls, Popular Games, Writing Cases, Water Colours, Photographic Albums, Working Models, Knives, &c., will be offered to successful competitors, to be chosen by themselves.

The publishers have determined that the ILLUSTRATIONS for the forthcoming year shall be decidedly superior to those which have hitherto appeared.

OPINION OF THE *Athenæum*.

"Time and Old Merry have a good mutual understanding: each treats the other handsomely, if, indeed, the editor can be said to deal liberally with the power whom he instructs young people to kill with jests and games, and uproarious laughter. Anyhow, Time does not seem to resent the measures taken for his amicable destruction by Old Merry, who thrives on his special occupation, and grows stronger, heartier, and more frolicsome every year he sees in and out. 'Now,' says the jolly and sagacious veteran, chipping about his prosperity as we wish all lucky fellows would chirp over their reasons for thankfulness, 'a word or two about our magazine. We are advancing: our 'staff' is larger, our circulation is better, our correspondents are more numerous, our waste-paper basket is bigger, our postage-stamp bill is heavy, and our prospects are brighter.' Right glad are we to hear that Mr. Merry can give so brave an account of his affairs: for public support is due to the caterer of wholesome amusement for little folk, for whose behoof he calls to his assistance such writers as Messrs. W. H. G. Kingston, R. M. Ballantyne, Edwin Hodder, J. S. Clifford, R. Hope Moncrieff, and Lieut. C. R. Low."

Cases for binding the Year's numbers, price 1s. 4d., richly gilt cloth.

DR. LIVINGSTONE.

Fcap. 8vo, price 5s., cloth elegant.

THE WEAVER BOY WHO BECAME A MISSION-ARY; being the Story of Dr. Livingstone's Life and Labours. By H. G. ADAMS. With Portrait and Illustrations.

HUNGRY VISITORS.



SPECIMEN OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

HODDER & STOUGHTON'S
FIRST STEPS TO
FRENCH, GERMAN, AND ITALIAN.

- I. *LE PETIT GRAMMAIRIEN*;
or, the Young Beginner's First Step to French Reading; a Sequel to "Le Petit Précepteur." By T. PAGLIARDINI, Head French Master of St. Paul's School, London. Square 16mo, 3s., cloth.
- II. *LE PETIT PRECEPTEUR*;
or, First Steps to French Conversation. By F. GRANDINEAU, formerly French Master to Her Majesty Queen Victoria. Author of "Conversations Familières," &c. 50 Woodcuts. Thirty-fifth edition. Square 16mo, 3s., cloth.
- III. *DER KLEINE LEHRER*;
or, First Steps to German Conversation. On the plan of "Le Petit Précepteur." Square 16mo, 3s., cloth.
- IV. *IL PICCOLO PRECETTORE*;
or, First Steps to Italian Conversation. Being a Translation from "Le Petit Précepteur." By F. GRANDINEAU. With additional Exercises. Square 16mo, 3s., cloth.
-

SHILLING SCHOOL BOOKS FOR BEGINNERS.

- I. *FIRST LESSONS IN GEOGRAPHY, IN QUESTION AND ANSWER.* New edition, completing an issue of 261,000 copies.
- II. *FIRST LESSONS IN ASTRONOMY, IN QUESTION AND ANSWER.* On the plan of "First Lessons in Geography." New edition, being the Seventh. Revised and corrected to present date.
- III. *FIRST LESSONS IN THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND, IN QUESTION AND ANSWER.* On the Plan of "First Lessons in Geography." Sixteenth edition.
- IV. *FIRST LESSONS ON THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.* By B. B. WOODWARD, B.A., F.S.A., Librarian to the Queen. Second edition.
- V. *FIRST LESSONS ON THE ENGLISH REFORMATION.* By the same author. Second edition.







